

**Food in the City: An Interdisciplinary Study of the Ideological and Symbolic Uses of Food in the Urban Environment in Later Medieval England.**

Sharon Wells

Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Medieval Studies.

The Centre for Medieval Studies  
The University of York.

23 August 2002

Contents

<b>Acknowledgements</b>	iii
<b>Abstract</b>	iv
<b>Abbreviations</b>	v
<b>Introduction</b>	1
<b>Chapter 1. Health: the Medicinal Aspects of Food</b>	
Introduction	12
The Classical Inheritance	15
Medical Practitioners	20
Medical Texts	25
Food in Medical Texts	29
Medieval Hospitals	42
Lydgate’s ‘Dietary’	48
<b>Chapter 2. Necessity: Civic Concerns Regarding Food Provisioning</b>	
Introduction	54
Food Legislation	63
The Display of Punishment	71
Medieval Cooks	77
Food Provision and Civic Ideology	84
<b>Chapter 3. The Church’s View of Food</b>	
Introduction	98
The Origin and Form of the Concept of Gluttony	101
Gluttony and the Laity	107
The Function of Gluttony	117
<b>Chapter 4. Hospitality: Social and Convivial Aspects of Food and Eating</b>	
Introduction	137
Urban Dining Practices	139
Women and Food	157
Urban Conviviality	161
<i>The Book of Margery Kempe</i>	178
<b>Conclusion</b>	184
<b>Bibliography</b>	187

## Acknowledgements

The largest debt of gratitude I owe is to my supervisors, Felicity Riddy and Sarah Rees Jones. In the three years I have worked with them they have been unfailing in their support and encouragement. Anything of value in this thesis owes its existence to their enthusiasm and dedication to duty.

In the writing of this thesis I have required the services of numerous libraries and archives; in particular I should like to offer my thanks for the help and assistance of the librarians and archivists in the British Library, the Corporation of London Record Office, the London Guildhall Library, the Borthwick Institute of Historical Research, the York Minster Archives, the York Minster Library, York King's Manor Library, and the York J.B.M. library.

In addition I should like to thank Ann Rycraft for the loan of many books, for acting as a sounding board for my ideas, for reading drafts of my chapters, and for never allowing me to take myself too seriously.

I am grateful to Keith Punshon for his advice on various theological matters, and to the Punshon household in general for their innumerable acts of kindness and support.

I am also grateful to Fiona Dunlop for unselfishly sharing ideas and reading material.

In addition to these named individuals there are many other people who made this project possible and bearable. You know who you are: thank you.

I was able to undertake this thesis through the funding of the A.H.R.B.



## **Abstract**

This thesis seeks to explore the ideological and symbolic uses of food in the later medieval city. It focuses on the cities of London and York, and covers the time period from *c.* 1350 until *c.* 1500.

This thesis is interdisciplinary, drawing primarily on historical and literary sources, with some use of art historical, archaeological, and architectural materials. It takes a thematic approach to its subject, focusing on four themes: health, necessity, excess, and sociability.

The first chapter considers the ways in which food was presented in medieval medical texts, in particular dietaries. An examination is first made of medical thinking within the learned academic environment. Subsequently I have endeavoured to consider the degree to which these medical ideas were prevalent in non-elite medical practice. By considering the specific information given by dietaries regarding the consumption of food, a social aspect to ideas of health is uncovered.

Chapter 2 considers civic attitudes towards food provisioning. Through an analysis of legislative documents in the light of readings of other less pragmatic materials a consciously constructed civic ideology is detected which has ideas concerning food at its heart.

Chapter 3 examines the theological concept of gluttony and the ways in which this rather esoteric idea might have functioned within the medieval city.

The final chapter draws together the ideas explored in the preceding chapters by considering ideas of sociability and hospitality. It also considers the ways in which existing models for aristocratic dining practice fit into the urban environment, and how the medieval city might have encouraged its own specific dining practices.



## Abbreviations

BIHR	York, Borthwick Institute of Historical Research
BL	London, British Library
CLBB	Sharpe, R. R., ed. <i>Calendar of Letter-Books Preserved Among the Archives of the City of London at the Guildhall: Letter-Book B. Circa AD 1275-1312</i> . London, 1900.
CLBD	Sharpe, R. R., ed. <i>Calendar of Letter-Books Preserved Among the Archives of the City of London at the Guildhall: Letter-Book D. Circa AD 1309-1314</i> . London, 1902.
CLBF	Sharpe, R. R., ed. <i>Calendar of Letter-Books Preserved Among the Archives of the City of London at the Guildhall: Letter-Book F. Circa AD 1337-1352</i> . London, 1904.
CLBG	Sharpe, R. R., ed. <i>Calendar of Letter-Books Preserved Among the Archives of the City of London at the Guildhall: Letter-Book G. Circa AD 1352-1374</i> . London, 1905.
CLBH	Sharpe, R. R., ed. <i>Calendar of Letter-Books Preserved Among the Archives of the City of London at the Guildhall: Letter-Book H. Circa AD 1375-1399</i> . London, 1907.
CLBI	Sharpe, R. R., ed. <i>Calendar of Letter-Books Preserved Among the Archives of the City of London at the Guildhall: Letter-Book I. Circa AD 1400-1422</i> . London, 1909.
CLBK	Sharpe, R. R., ed. <i>Calendar of Letter-Books Preserved Among the Archives of the City of London at the Guildhall: Letter-Book K. Temp. Henry VI</i> . London, 1911.
CLBL	Sharpe, R. R., ed. <i>Calendar of Letter-Books Preserved Among the Archives of the City of London at the Guildhall: Letter-Book A. Temp. Edward IV-Henry VII</i> . London, 1912.
CLRO	Corporation of London Record Office
CPMR, 1364-1381	Thomas, A. H., ed. <i>Calendar of Plea and Memoranda Rolls Preserved Among the Archives of the Corporation of the City of London at the Guildhall. AD 1364-1381</i> . Cambridge, 1929.
CPMR, 1381-1412	Thomas, A. H., ed. <i>Calendar of Select Pleas and Memoranda Rolls Preserved Among the Archives of the Corporation of the</i>

- City of London at the Guildhall. AD 1381-1412.* Cambridge, 1932.
- CPMR, 1413-1437 Thomas, A. H., ed. *Calendar of Plea and Memoranda Rolls Preserved Among the Archives of the Corporation of the City of London at the Guildhall. AD 1323-1364.* Cambridge, 1943.
- EETS Early English Text Society
- ES Extra Series
- NS New Series
- OS Original Series
- SS Supplementary Series
- YHB, 1 Attreed, L. C., ed. *The York House Books 1461-1490. Volume 1: House Books One and Two/ Four.* Stroud, 1991.
- YHB, 2 Attreed, L. C., ed. *The York House Books 1461-1490. Volume 2: House Books five-Six.* Stroud, 1991.
- YMA York Minster Archives
- YMB, 1 Sellers, M., ed. *York Memorandum Book: Part I (1376-1419). Lettered A/ Y in the Guildhall Muniment Room.* Surtees Society 120. 1911.
- YMB, 2 Sellers, M., ed. *York Memorandum Book: Part II (1388-1493). Lettered A/ Y in the Guildhall Muniment Room.* Surtees Society 125. 1915.



## Introduction

My interest in medieval food began as an undergraduate when I was set a number of medieval romances to read, amongst which was *Havelok* (c. 1300). I was struck by the remarkable ways in which food is used in this text to shape and drive the narrative. Food is used to appeal to a common humanity amongst men of differing social status: all must eat to live and are consequently driven to action by hunger. It is also, by contrast, one of the means by which Havelok is set aside as a member of the aristocracy: not only is Havelok's nobility revealed by the light 'Al so brith, al so shir,/ So it were a blase of fir' which shines from his mouth while he is asleep, it is also shown in his voracious appetite which means he eats more than the lowly 'Grim an hise children fiue'.<sup>1</sup> It is used to dignify and encourage virtuous manual labour when Havelok decides to find employment as the servant to a cook: 'It is no schame for to swinken!/ Þe man þat may wel eten and drinken/ Þat nouth ne haue but on swink long'.<sup>2</sup> It even provides the rallying cry used by a lord to encourage his men to fight and risk their lives on his behalf: 'Jch haue you fed and yet shal fede - / Helpe me nu in þis nede'.<sup>3</sup> The complexity revealed in this text in the relationship between a man and the food he eats has provided the impetus for my pursuit of the study the functions of food in the Middle Ages.

The subject one chooses to study, however, often has as much to say about the context in which the thesis is written as the historical period on which we chose to write. A quick glance through any recent television guide will reveal a range of programmes dedicated to various aspects of food production, preparation, and consumption. The cult of the celebrity cook has arisen in a society in which the meal shared by the family appears to be a dying phenomenon and the microwavable meal has become the adjunct of the successful business person whose time is too precious to be wasted on food preparation. Lively debate surrounds governmental food policy, which has at its heart the apparently laudable aim of providing cheap food for all. The industrialisation of farming, which has cost and not quality as its agenda, has increasingly been called into question, with issues such as the genetic modification of food hitting newspaper headlines. Significant for my work on the Middle Ages is the realisation that all those

---

<sup>1</sup> G. V. Smithers (ed.), *Havelok* (Oxford, 1987), p. 39, ll. 1254-55; p. 26, l. 795. A manuscript containing this text is thought to have belonged to a London goldsmith in the fifteenth century: *ibid.*, pp. xiii-xiv.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 26, ll. 800-2. The final line can be translated: 'he ought not to have it, save as a result of labour'.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 66, ll. 2421-22.



engaged in the debate regarding modern food provisioning draw upon ideologically loaded rhetorics in order to promote their cause.<sup>4</sup> It is this same subtle complexity of rhetoric which I aim to explore in the source materials which survive from the medieval city.

As a result of the this increasing modern interest in food a number of studies have been undertaken in recent years on the subject of medieval food. Archaeologists have, for example, examined the food remains found in medieval cesspits and rubbish dumps, and studied pollen distribution in order to discover what was eaten in the Middle ages.<sup>5</sup> The field of economic history has produced various studies on the subjects of food trade and distribution. Very much at the forefront of this field is Christopher Dyer, who has produced several thorough and meticulous surveys dealing with diet and standards of living in the Middle Ages.<sup>6</sup> In such works he has dealt with the quality and content of the diets of different sectors of society, the percentage of income spent on food, and whether starvation was an active reality in medieval society. Studies of food provision and distribution in specific geographical areas include the work of the *Feeding the City* project on grain supply in London, and, works such as those by Richard Britnell and Maryanne Kowaleski, which, though focusing on wider issues of trade and marketing, contain large amounts of information on food sales and distribution.<sup>7</sup> Work

---

<sup>4</sup> For example, ideas of “naturalness” are often drawn upon. Similarly, the proponents of genetic modification adopt a moral stand with their “feed-the-third-world” propaganda.

<sup>5</sup> Scholarship in this area is vast. Studies concentrating on London and York include J. Giorgi, ‘Diet in Medieval and Early Modern London: The Archaeological Evidence’, in D. Gaimster and P. Stamper (eds.), *The Age of Transition: The Archaeology of English Culture 1400-1600. Proceedings of a Conference Hosted by the Society for Medieval Archaeology and the Society for Post-Medieval Archaeology at the British Museum, London, 14-15<sup>th</sup> November 1996* (Oxford, 1997), pp. 197-213; A. Hall, ‘A Brief History of Plant Foods in the City of York: What the Cesspits Tell Us’, in E. White (ed.), *Feeding a City: York. The Provision of Food from Roman Times to the Beginning of the Twentieth Century* (Totnes, 2000), pp. 23-41; T. O’Connor, ‘Bones as Evidence of Meat Production and Distribution in York’, in White (ed.), *Feeding a City*, pp. 43-60.

<sup>6</sup> C. Dyer, ‘English Diet in the Later Middle Ages’, in T. H. Aston *et al.* (eds.), *Social Relations and Ideas: Essays in Honour of R. H. Hilton* (Cambridge, 1983), pp. 191-216; there are several relevant essays in C. Dyer, *Everyday Life in Medieval England* (London, 1994); C. Dyer, *Standards of Living in the Middle Ages: Social Change in England c. 1200-1520*, revised edn. (Cambridge, 1998); C. Dyer, ‘Did the Peasants Really Starve in Medieval England?’, in M. Carlin and J. T. Rosenthal (eds.), *Food and Eating in Medieval Europe* (London, 1998), pp. 53-71.

<sup>7</sup> B. N. S. Campbell *et al.*, *A Medieval Capital and Its Grain Supply: Agrarian Production and Its Distribution in the London region c. 1300* (London, 1993). A study of the aims and methodology of the *Feeding the City* project can be found in J. A. Galloway and M. Murphy, ‘Feeding the City: Medieval London and Its Agrarian Hinterland’, *London Journal* 16 (1991): 3-14; M. Murphy, ‘Feeding Medieval Cities: Some Historical Approaches’, in Carlin and Rosenthal (eds.), *Food and Eating in Medieval Europe*, pp. 117-131. Numerous other studies have been made which deal in varying degrees with London food provisioning and consumption. See, for example, D. Keene, ‘Medieval London and Its Region’, *London Journal* 14 (1989): 99-111; J. A. Galloway, ‘Driven by Drink? Ale Consumption and the Agrarian Economy of the London Region, c. 1300-1400’, in Carlin and Rosenthal (eds.), *Food and Eating in Medieval Europe*, pp. 87-100. Food trades in the London suburbs are discussed in G. Rosser, *Medieval*



has also been undertaken by historians on the subject of those working in the medieval victualling industries.<sup>8</sup> As the functional and material aspects of medieval food provisioning and consumption are so well documented, it is not my intention here to produce another such survey. As such studies, however, focus primarily on the practicalities of food production, distribution, and consumption and take little or no account of the wider symbolic, social, and ideological implications of their findings, it is my intention to explore these areas which have received less critical attention.

Works which do take account of some of these broader issues include those of J. M. Thurgood, Christopher Woolgar and ffiona Swabey.<sup>9</sup> These historical studies are, however, based entirely on examinations of the behaviour of the aristocracy and nobility, primarily within the rural manor-house setting.<sup>10</sup> Often allied to this interest in the dining habits of the upper sectors of rural society are the studies made by literary scholars who analyse the functions of food within medieval literature.<sup>11</sup> Although work on the symbolic values of food in the lower sectors of society has been undertaken, the richness of the information regarding dining practices found in texts such as *Sir Gawain*

---

*Westminster, 1200-1540* (Oxford, 1989); M. Carlin, *Medieval Southwark* (London, 1996). R. H. Britnell, *Growth and Decline in Colchester, 1300-1525* (Cambridge, 1986); R. H. Britnell, *The Commercialisation of English Society 1000-1500* (Cambridge, 1993); M. Kowaleski, *Local Markets and Regional Trade in Medieval Exeter* (Cambridge, 1995). A useful introduction to food provisioning and consumption in medieval York is A. Rycraft, 'Can We Tell What People Ate in Late Medieval York?', in White (ed.), *Feeding a City*, pp. 61-78.

<sup>8</sup> See, for example, H. Swanson, *Medieval Artisans: An Urban Class in Late Medieval England* (Oxford, 1989), pp. 9-25; J. M. Bennett, *Ale, Beer and Brewsters in England: Women's Work in a Changing World, 1300-1600* (Oxford, 1996); M. Carlin, 'Fast Food and Urban Living Standards in Medieval England', in Carlin and Rosenthal (eds.), *Food and Eating in Medieval England*, pp. 27-51.

<sup>9</sup> J. M. Thurgood, 'The Diet and Domestic Households of the English Lay Nobility, 1265-1531' (Unpublished MPhil Diss., Queen Mary's College, London University, 1982); C. Woolgar, 'Diet and Consumption in Gentry and Noble Households: A Case Study from Around the Wash', in R. E. Archer and S. Walker (eds.), *Rulers and Ruled in Late Medieval England: Essays Presented to Gerald Harris* (London, 1995), pp. 17-31; C. M. Woolgar, *The Great Household in Later Medieval England* (London, 1999); C. Woolgar, 'Fast and Feast: Conspicuous Consumption and the Diet of the Nobility in the Fifteenth Century', in M. Hicks (ed.), *Revolution and Consumption in Late Medieval England* (Woodbridge, 2001), pp. 7-25; ff. Swabey, 'The Household of Alice de Bryene, 1412-13', in Carlin and Rosenthal (eds.), *Food and Eating in Medieval Europe*, pp. 133-44; ff. Swabey, *Medieval Gentlewoman: Life in a Widow's Household in the Later Middle Ages* (Stroud, 1999).

<sup>10</sup> Also useful in this area from the architectural perspective is M. Girouard, *Life in the English Country House: A Social and Architectural History* (London, 1978).

<sup>11</sup> Just a few examples are F. B. Jonassen, 'Carnival Food Imagery in Chaucer's Description of the Franklin', *Studies in the Age of Chaucer* 16 (1994): 99-117; D. Brewer, 'Feasts', in D. Brewer and J. Gibson (ed.), *A Companion to the Gawain Poet* (Cambridge, 1997), pp. 131-42; S. F. Weiss, 'Medieval and Renaissance Wedding Banquets and Other Feasts', in Carlin and Rosenthal (eds.), *Food and Eating in Medieval Europe*, pp. 159-74.



*and the Green Knight* has tended to bias study in the direction of the rural aristocracy.<sup>12</sup> One area in which the symbolic aspects of food consumption are well documented is that of religious devotion. The theological implications of consumption, both literal and metaphorical, are examined in studies by Philip Reynolds and Reindert Falkenburg.<sup>13</sup> Perhaps better known are the works of Rudolph Bell and Caroline Walker Bynum, who study the religious significance of food to medieval women.<sup>14</sup> These studies have proved to be extremely popular despite, or perhaps because of, the fact that they focus on extreme and exceptional aspects of women's behaviour regarding food: both Bell and Bynum focus on women's non-consumption of food and the bizarre miracles surrounding self-starving holy women. It is questionable, therefore, what significance such esoteric behaviour had in the lives of everyday medieval women.

By far the largest body of work on medieval food and dining falls into the category of what might be termed "food history". Such works concentrate on recipes, cooking processes, foods consumed, and the setting of ceremonial dinners. The usefulness of these studies to the researcher is often limited for a number of reasons. In some cases the medieval period receives limited treatment as a result of a tendency to cover a broad chronological spectrum and geographical area.<sup>15</sup> Even studies focusing on the Middle Ages can sacrifice specificity for a general narrative description of the more spectacular aspects of medieval diet and dining; indeed, they often also include ideas on how one might reproduce one's own medieval feast as their *pièce de résistance*.<sup>16</sup> More infuriatingly, there is a tendency (as admittedly in all areas of research) for "food historians" to cite each other; this becomes problematic in this particular field as the earliest traceable source for a particular piece of information in these works often proves

---

<sup>12</sup> There is, nevertheless, a considerable body of literary scholarship on other aspects of food symbolism, of which the following are just two examples: J. Mann, 'Eating and Drinking in *Piers Plowman*', *Essays and Studies* 32 (1979): 26-42; E. M. Biebel, 'Pilgrims to Table: Food Consumption in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*', in Carlin and Rosenthal (eds.), *Food and Eating in Medieval Europe*, pp. 15-26.

<sup>13</sup> P. L. Reynolds, *Food and the Body: Some Peculiar Questions in High Medieval Theology* (Leiden, 1999); R. L. Falkenburg, *The Fruit of Devotion: Mysticism and the Imagery of Love in Flemish Paintings of the Virgin and Child 1450-1550*, trans. S. Herman (Amsterdam, 1994). Although its title might suggest otherwise, this latter text primarily discusses theological metaphors of consumption found in religious language of love, the mystical tradition, and in affective religious experiences.

<sup>14</sup> R. M. Bell, *Holy Anorexia* (London, 1985); C. W. Bynum, 'Fast, Feast, and Flesh: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women', *Representations* 11 (1985): 1-25; C. W. Bynum, *Holy Feast and Holy Fast: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women* (London, 1987).

<sup>15</sup> See, for example, C. A. Wilson, *Food and Drink in Britain from the Stone Age to Recent Times* (London, 1973).

<sup>16</sup> See, for example, M. P. Cosman, *Fabulous Feasts: Medieval Cookery and Ceremony* (New York, 1976).



to be entirely unsupported by primary evidence.<sup>17</sup> On the whole, the emphasis is upon “heritage” rather than scholarly historical research, as much of the work produced by “food historians” is not aimed at a specifically academic audience.<sup>18</sup>

In general, the majority of texts written on the subject of medieval food have contributed to the formation of an image of the medieval world in the modern consciousness in which eating practices are shown to vacillate wildly between the near-ascetical deprivation of fasting, both as a consequence of theological devotion and food scarcity, and the horrific, uncontrolled over-consumption of feasting. One need only consider how often the words fast and/ or feast occur in titles of books concerned with food in the Middle Ages to see the validity of this proposition. This simplistic view of the Middle Ages has tended to be absorbed by sociologists, who see the medieval period as the uncomplicated base line against which other “more civilised” societies can be measured.<sup>19</sup> It is my intention in this thesis, therefore, to attempt to examine the more typical modes of consumption which were prevalent during the medieval period, with the aim of producing a more balanced view of dining practices in the Middle Ages. By considering the eating habits of those individuals below the level of the aristocracy I hope to be able to provide a more comprehensive picture of the ideological and symbolic aspects of medieval food provision and consumption.

I have chosen to focus my study on the medieval city. In part this is because a great deal of work has already been done on rural (aristocratic) dining. More influential in my choice, however, is the fact that cities are unable to provide for their own food needs; they rely upon an rural hinterland for large quantities of the food they consume.

---

<sup>17</sup> In its very worst form, ‘food history’ can be seen as no more than the circulation of myths and fictions, lacking basis in historical fact. There is also a tendency for books on food history to be badly footnoted, which can result in the works of even academic scholars being less than adequately referenced; see, for example, T. Scully, *The Art of Cookery in the Middle Ages* (Woodbridge, 1995).

<sup>18</sup> It can, however, prove a useful starting point from which to begin a consideration of medieval food. Of particular value are P. W. Hammond, *Food and Feast in Medieval England* (Stroud, 1993); B. A. Henisch, *Fast and Feast: Food in Medieval Society* (London, 1976). It might be argued that I am being harsh in my judgement of food historians, but Bridget Henisch classifies herself as ‘an armchair scholar’: B. A. Henisch, *The Medieval Calendar Year* (Pennsylvania, 1999), p. vii.

<sup>19</sup> Stephen Mennell, for example, refers to the people of the Middle Ages as oscillating between ‘extremes of gluttonous gorging and enforced fasting’: S. Mennell, ‘On the Civilizing of the Appetite’, *Theory, Culture and Society* 4 (1987): 378. This article is a reworking of his chapter on the same subject in S. Mennell, *All Manners of Food: Eating and Taste in England and France from the Middle Ages to the Present* (Oxford, 1995). Mennell sees characters renowned for their coarse eating habits, such as Dr Johnson, as throwbacks ‘to the mode of behaviour typical of medieval and early modern Europe’: Mennell, ‘On the Civilizing of Appetite’, p. 388. Such a conclusion reveals an ignorance of medieval conduct literature, by which Dr Johnson’s coarse eating habits would have been likewise castigated. This highly-acclaimed work by Mennell is marred by inadequate historical research. See, for example, his claim that “‘miraculous fasting’ girls’ only come into being in the sixteenth century: *ibid.*, p. 397.



Thus, it is necessary for cities to construct complex networks and policies regarding food provisioning in order to ensure supplies and to prevent shortages. As a consequence, a study of the medieval city should provide a particularly rich source of information, both as a result of the documentation that must be produced in order to sustain this complex system of distribution, and also because it might be expected that ideologies surrounding food in the city would be more accessible in such a complex and regulated environment.

Any researcher approaching the study of the medieval city is faced by the realisation that even the fundamental idea of the city, its basic definition, is a fiercely contested area.<sup>20</sup> The latest *magnum opus* produced on the medieval city, *The Cambridge Urban History of Britain, 600-1540*, has adopted a broadly socio-economic ‘working definition’ of what constitutes urban, based on an earlier definition constructed by Susan Reynolds.<sup>21</sup> Here the town is defined first as a permanent, concentrated human settlement in which a significant proportion of the population is engaged in non-agricultural occupations, resulting in the town being fed by food produced by people who live outside it. The second part of the definition is concerned with self perception: that the inhabitants of towns usually regard themselves, and are regarded by rural dwellers, as a different sort of people. Clearly food is absolutely central to this idea of what constitutes a town. What is remarkable, therefore, is that after stating this relatively short ‘working definition’ the subject of food receives barely a mention in the rest of the volume. It is my intention here, therefore, to consider some of the ways in which food was central to the medieval city and how medieval urban dwellers came to perceive their city.

The medieval city is, however, a vast area of study and it has been necessary for me to restrict the focus of my study in order to make the volume of material manageable. As a result I have restricted my study primarily to secular society; the eating practices of those living within religious houses, for example, are a subject

---

<sup>20</sup> This is an area of lively critical debate. The following collection of essays provides a useful starting point: R. Holt and G. Rosser (eds.), *The Medieval Town: A Reader in English Urban History, 1200-1540* (London, 1990).

<sup>21</sup> D. M. Palliser, ‘Introduction’, in D. M. Palliser (ed.), *The Cambridge Urban History of Britain: Volume I. 600-1540* (Cambridge, 2000), p. 5. This definition is based on S. Reynolds, ‘The Writing of Medieval Urban History in England’, *Theoretische Geschichte* 19 (1992): 49-50.



worthy of independent study.<sup>22</sup> I have also restricted the geographical area of my study to the major cities of London and York. While London was by far the largest English medieval city and the capital of the nation, York considered itself to be the chief town in the north.<sup>23</sup> Thus, in terms of similarity, London and York provide an appropriate combination for comparison. As London, however, was quite exceptional in England in its size, influence, wealth, and proximity to the machinery of royal power, York also provides a case-study which might be more typical of that of other provincial English cities and larger towns.<sup>24</sup>

In part, of course, London and York have also been chosen for practical reasons, on the basis of their surviving civic records. London possesses a substantial collection of civic legislation dealing with food provisioning and distribution dating from the thirteenth century.<sup>25</sup> By contrast, the material from York is from a slightly later period. A collection of civic ordinances dealing with food exist for 1301, when York was the administrative capital of England, but the majority of information regarding the food trade in York is located in the York Memorandum Books and the York House Books which date from the later fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Consequently, the focus of this study is primarily on the period *c.* 1350 to *c.* 1500. Also, as it is part of the aim of this thesis to attempt to discover the ideas, concerns, and practices surrounding the eating habits of members of the populace below the level of the nobility, these dates are also consistent with the study of texts from a variety of genres written in the language of

---

<sup>22</sup> This area of research has already received some attention in J. H. Tillotson, *Marrick Priory: A Nunnery in Late Medieval Yorkshire*, Borthwick Paper 75 (York, 1989); B. Harvey, *Living and Dying in England 1100-1540: The Monastic Experience. The Ford Lectures Delivered in the University of Oxford in the Hilary Term 1989* (Oxford, 1993), pp. 34-70; E. White, 'The Measure of the Meat: Monastic Diet in Medieval England', in C. A. Wilson (ed.), *Food for the Community: Special Diets for Special Groups* (Edinburgh, 1993), pp. 5-42; S. Wells, 'The Social Meanings of Food in Late Medieval England' (Unpublished MA Diss., York University, 1999).

<sup>23</sup> The *Chronicle of the Archbishops of York*, copied into the *York Memorandum Book* in 1420, refers to York as the chief city of all of the north of Britain, and places it on an equal footing with London in describing the two cities as the most celebrated before all others both for their antiquity and their wealth of materials, and also because they were frequented by so many people. '*Eboraca vero et ipsa totius aquilonalis et septentionalis Britannie civitatis principalis [...] praedictas duas civitates tam antiquitate et rerum opulentia, quam populorum frequentia Britannia prae ceteris nominatissimas habebat*': J. Raine (ed.), *The Historians of the Church of York and Its Archbishops*, Rolls Series 71 (London, 1886), 2: 314-15; *YMB*, 2: 101.

<sup>24</sup> The truth of this supposition could, of course, only be proved by the actual study of other English towns.

<sup>25</sup> Some of London's custumals date from this period and also the earliest Letter Books.



the populace: Middle English.<sup>26</sup> The Middle English literary, theological, and medical texts that I have chosen for study in this thesis can be located, almost exclusively, by either place of production or ownership, in the cities of London and York. Thus, I can be confident in my assertions that the ideas and beliefs which I discuss were current, at least to some degree, in these cities.<sup>27</sup> A notable exception is *The Book of Margery Kempe*. I justify my use of this text on the grounds that it is a text which is fundamentally concerned with urban life, describing scenes which purport to take place in several cities including York and London.

It is my firm belief that an interdisciplinary approach is the means by which the most complete picture of the ideological and symbolic views of food within medieval society is accessible. Consequently, in the writing of this thesis I have used materials from a range of disciplines. I have drawn heavily upon historical sources including legislative materials, probate inventories, and wills. These sources reflect, to varying degrees, a version of actual medieval life; they are also ‘narrative fictions’.<sup>28</sup> As for all areas of historical study, the fictive nature of these sources poses inevitable problems. It is also, however, particularly useful in my chosen field of study, as it is my intention to read these historical sources, in what might be termed a “literary” fashion, in order to access the ideological basis of such historical documentation. I also use a wide range of literary sources: theological material, such as sermon and confessional literature; didactic literature, such as conduct texts and Lydgate’s ‘Dietary’; and also more “traditional” literary works, such as those by Langland, Chaucer, and Gower.<sup>29</sup> A potential weakness of these sources, that they were not written in order to represent a social reality but rather an ideal, is transformed into a strength in this thesis as I attempt

---

<sup>26</sup> On the rise of Middle English and the growth of literacy in the Middle Ages see, for instance, C. P. Christianson, ‘A Century of the Manuscript-Book Trade in Late Medieval London’, *Medievalia et humanistica*, NS 12 (1984): 143-65; J. H. Fisher, ‘Chaucer and the Written Language’, in T. J. Heffernan (ed.), *The Popular Literature of Medieval England* (Knoxville, 1985), pp. 237-51.

<sup>27</sup> In Chapter 3 some of the theological texts I cite have no known connection with London or York. I have chosen to use these texts as time restrictions made it necessary for me to use printed texts. As theological writings on gluttony, as I show, share fundamentally the same basis throughout the Middle Ages I do not believe this decision is particularly problematic.

<sup>28</sup> This term is used by Jeremy Goldberg in an article which discusses the potential methodological problems inherent to the use of the York cause papers as historical sources for the depiction of social realities: P. J. P. Goldberg, ‘Fiction in the Archives: The York Cause Papers as a Source for Later Medieval Social History’, *Continuity and Change* 12 (1997): 435. I have noted any particular problems attendant on the use of specific source materials as they appear in the relevant chapter.

<sup>29</sup> The majority of the texts I have used are written in Middle English. I have provided, where relevant, translations from texts in foreign languages. Where texts provide an English translation I have tended to use those, unless otherwise stated. All translations which are my own are marked as such.



to examine the ideological and symbolic basis of food activities.<sup>30</sup> As I have used such disparate source materials I have given considerable thought to the means by which I might draw the most from their potential strengths and weaknesses. In many ways it would be most natural to divide the thesis up into chapters based on food production, distribution, and consumption. However, as I felt this approach would be likely to produce a thesis which would draw primarily on traditional historical sources and utilise material from other disciplines only as quasi-decorative adjuncts, I have opted to take a thematic approach. The themes I have chosen to explore are health, necessity, excess, and hospitality, which, I hope to show, are all moral categories within the Middle Ages.

My first chapter considers health, a concept which is very much an individual concern. In this chapter I consider the ways in which food is presented within medieval medical texts. This entails an examination of medical thinking within an elite, learned environment. In order to ascertain whether these scholarly views of food and medicine were current lower down the social ladder I have explored the nature of medical care available within the city and the textual basis of that care. Clearly, however, a whole range of other medical practitioners were working at the very lowest rank of society, who have left no documentary records of their existence. Consequently the picture I produce of medieval urban medical care is necessarily only partial. My source materials for this chapter are primarily Middle English medical treatises, in particular dietaries. By studying the specific information given by these texts regarding the consumption of food I hope to be able to show that whereas today health is very much an individual concern in the Middle Ages it possessed a social aspect.

In the rest of the thesis I explore the various social aspects of food. As the city is distinct in part because of the fact that it relies on outsiders for its food supply, it is the civic network devised to deal with this potential problem that I study in Chapter 2. I begin with the premise, drawn from literary and art historical materials, that the provision of the body's basic necessities, food and clothing, is that which is required to ensure a peaceful city. Through an examination of legislative material I consider the means by which the civic authorities attempted to control food provision and distribution within the city. My source materials for this chapter are articles of civic legislation found in the London Letter-Books, the London Plea and Memoranda Rolls, the York Memorandum Books, and the York House Books. As was suggested above, all

---

<sup>30</sup> The same is also true of the art historical material I use.



medieval legislative material needs to be used with a degree of caution as it was not written with the future historian in mind. It is not possible to tell to what extent such legislation was infringed. Reading through collections of legislation can lead one to believe that the medieval city was a den of vice and crime. As Steven Justice points out, however, legislation and the legal system ‘rarely celebrate virtue’.<sup>31</sup> Furthermore, the authors of medieval legislation seldom openly state the ideology or the reasons which lie behind that legislation. Thus, the modern researcher faced with the piece of London legislation for 1416, which states that geese henceforth should be sold whole, with their heads, feet, and intestines intact, is faced with the problem of ascertaining precisely what this civic ruling actually indicates.<sup>32</sup> It might mean that the civic government was responding to poulterers’ customers’ complaints about being undersold; it might indicate that the civic authorities were taking an oblique approach in attempting to avoid the practice of selling on these unappetising parts of the bird to pastelers who then went on to put them into the fillings of pies;<sup>33</sup> it might mean a combination of both of the above; it might also indicate some entirely different concern. Thus analysis of legislative material is, to some extent, an act of speculative interpretation. It is my aim in this chapter, by considering civic food legislation as not only legislative fact but also ideologically-loaded narrative fictions, to attempt to gain access to a specific civic ideology concerning food. It is my contention that what can actually be detected in civic food legislation is not so much a concern with bodily necessity but rather the construction of the city as a place of plenty.

Just as the civic authorities had a programme of legislation, so too there was a programme of episcopal legislation, which in many ways can be seen as running counter to the civic ideal of the city as the place of plenty. Although plenty can be seen as a positive ideal, it soon begins to take on negative connotations if we think of it as excess. It is my intention in Chapter 3 to consider this pejorative side of plenty and the form it took in episcopal legislation as the concept of gluttony. My source material for this chapter is the vast body of material written on the seven deadly sins, including confessional material, sermon tracts, and more obviously literary texts, such as *Piers Plowman*. In the course of the chapter I trace the development of the concept of gluttony

---

<sup>31</sup> S. Justice, *Writing and Rebellion: England in 1381* (London, 1994), p. 54.

<sup>32</sup> *CLBI*, p. 169; H. T. Riley (ed.), *Memorials of London and London Life in the XIIIth, XIVth, and XVth Centuries* (London, 1861), p. 644.

<sup>33</sup> Just such a practice was directly legislated against in London in 1379: *CLBH*, pp. 338-39; Riley (ed.), *Memorials*, p. 438.



from its inception at the hands of the desert ascetics through to the forms it took in later Middle English texts. I also consider what, if any, role this severe and rather esoteric definition of excessive consumption might have had in the medieval city and urban household.

In the final chapter I attempt to bring together some of the ideas which have arisen in the earlier chapters. I attempt to reconcile the apparently incompatible concepts of plenty and excess examined in Chapters 2 and 3, and also the ideas of moderation brought out in Chapter 1, by concentrating on the concept of hospitality and its forms and functions within the urban home and the city at large. An extensive study of hospitality in the medieval and early modern period has been made by Felicity Heal.<sup>34</sup> Her study focuses primarily on hospitality within religious establishments and large rural households; her examination of urban hospitality occupies one chapter and is primarily concerned with large civic entertainments, such as royal visitations. Consequently, I largely ignore large-scale civic entertainment and focus instead upon smaller-scale hospitality as demonstrated in the urban home and the guild hall. This chapter draws on material from a variety of sources, including architectural material, probate inventories, guild ordinances, cause papers from the York ecclesiastical courts, conduct literature, and literary texts. I use this varied material to consider the extent to which existing models for rural, aristocratic dining practices can be seen to fit with the evidence of urban dining practices. I also consider the extent to which specific aspects of life in the city, such as issues of privacy brought about by the proximities of urban living conditions and ideas of neighbourliness, might have affected the ways in which hospitality was used in the city to effect social cohesion and differentiation. I also briefly consider the different relationships men and women had with food.

The overall aim of this thesis is to consider the ways in which these different themes interact and compete in the urban environment in order to produce a fuller and richer description of symbolic and ideological aspects surrounding the uses of food within the medieval city than is currently available.

---

<sup>34</sup> F. Heal, *Hospitality in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 1990).



## Health: The Medicinal Aspects of Food

### Introduction

Man must eat in order to live. Indeed, if one were to suggest that food carries any absolute value it would be its nutritional value. Every food item today can be catalogued as possessing a specific number of calories, as being composed of identifiable quantities of protein, carbohydrate, fat, and fibre, and as containing known amounts of various vitamins and minerals. This is considered the basic information which every shopper has a right to know. One must be allowed to consider modern ideas of healthy eating when selecting one's purchases and so foods are usually sold with this information printed on their packaging. As with many "scientific truths", however, even this absolute quality can be seen to be a culturally-constructed value. These values are only "real", "meaningful", and "true" in as much as they are the qualities chosen to reflect the medical concerns of this specific age. How, though, can medical "facts" be no more than culturally-constructed values?

To a large extent medical facts are premised upon current concepts of the body and of disease. It is usual in the work of modern medical historians to observe an unchanging continuity in concepts both of the body and disease.<sup>1</sup> Despite the move by medical historians towards social history there is still a tendency to distinguish between a social realm of practice and effects, and a discrete world of scientific facts. Consequently, medical "facts" are withdrawn from historical study, and the assumption of the sameness of past and present bodies and diseases tends to render invisible the processes involved, for example, in the creation of disease identity.<sup>2</sup> When considered rationally, however, it is evident a disease is a highly complex construct made up of physical sensations, outcome, perceptions of cause, etc. In other words, a disease is, to a large extent, a product of the questions we ask of it, and clearly the questions we ask are dependent upon the cultural and historical context. For example, whereas diseases of the modern day, and the questions we ask of them, are based upon knowledge at the microscopic level, medieval diagnosis of disease was based upon the observation of

---

<sup>1</sup> Later in this chapter the medieval conception of the humoral body will be discussed. The problems arising from critics assuming an unchangeable scientific conception of the body is explored in Chapter 4.

<sup>2</sup> For a discussion of some of the pitfalls faced by the medical historian who assumes a simple continuity in the identity of epidemics (and a consideration of the unwary who have fallen into them) see R. S. Bray. *Armies of Pestilence: The Effects of Pandemics on History* (Cambridge, 1996).



macro-phenomena.<sup>3</sup>

Disease identities do not, therefore, necessarily correspond from one culture to another, nor are they necessarily constant over time.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, the historian who describes medieval people as ‘desperate for information’ as a result of their ignorance of the ‘microbial pathology’ of the plague is conflating and confusing modern and medieval scientific truths.<sup>5</sup> Medical knowledge inevitably seems primitive when looked at from a position of “greater” knowledge, but this does not mean that diseases were not “understood” in the past. Medieval physicians did understand the plague and its causes, it is merely that they understood these facts in ways different to how we understand them now. In the medieval period contagion was understood not as the cause of disease but rather as a precipitating factor acting upon the humorally imbalanced state of the individual.<sup>6</sup> Such a view is quite alien to the modern mind deeply entrenched in microbial theory, but, nevertheless, one should not make the mistake of assuming that the modern view of disease is the product of some natural, autonomous, scientific truth which is free from the influences of culture and history.

The same is true of ideas concerning the nutritional (and thus medicinal) values of food. Take the example of sugar. In the Middle Ages cane sugar was imported into England in vast quantities from its place of production, the ‘leyes and pondes faste by pe

---

<sup>3</sup> Even if pre-modern medical practitioners did speculate on the cause of diseases via, for example, miasmas or seeds, such phenomena were only ever seen with the eye of faith: V. Nutton, ‘The Seeds of Disease: An Explanation of Contagion and Infection from the Greeks to the Renaissance’, *Medical history* 27 (1983): 34. For a discussion of the historical and cultural grounding of microbial theory see A. Cunningham, ‘Transforming Plague: The Laboratory and the Identity of Infectious Disease’, in A. Cunningham and P. Williams (eds.), *The Laboratory Revolution in Medicine* (Cambridge, 1992), pp. 209-44. For an attempt to avoid the assumption of modern epidemiology in the study of medieval medicine see J. Arrizabalaga, ‘Facing the Black Death: Perceptions and Reactions of University Medical Practitioners’, in L. García-Ballester *et al.* (eds.), *Practical Medicine From Salerno to the Black Death* (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 237-88.

<sup>4</sup> Cunningham, ‘Transforming Plague’, p. 212. It is for this reason that some diseases which have existed in the past no longer exist today. For example, the disease chlorosis, from which many individuals suffered in the nineteenth century, is impossible to contract today. This is not as a result of its elimination, but because it has ceased to be identified as a disease. K. Figlio has investigated the way chlorosis functioned to support capitalist ideology and suggest that it lasted as a disease for only as long as its social meaning lasted: K. Figlio, ‘Chlorosis and Chronic Disease in Nineteenth-Century Britain: The Social Constitution of Somatic Illness in Capitalist Society’, *Social History* 3 (1978): 167-97.

<sup>5</sup> P. Pickett, ‘A Translation of the “Canutus” Plague Treatise’, in L. M. Matherson (ed.), *Popular and Practical Science of Medieval England* (East Lansing, 1994), pp. 263-64.

<sup>6</sup> In a fifteenth-century translation of John of Burgundy’s plague tract, although the significance of ‘euyl vapours’ is acknowledged, the point is made that they are ‘not alone cause of moreyne but also haboundance of humors corrupt in hem þat dien. As Galien saith in his boke of ffevers the body suffreth no corrupcion, but if the matier of the body be prompt or redy þerto’: D. W. Singer, ‘Some Plague Tractates (Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries)’, *Proceedings of the Royal Society of Medicine* 9 (1916): 163-64.



ryuer Nilus'.<sup>7</sup> As an imported good, sugar was an expensive item associated with the luxury of the court.<sup>8</sup> It was valued, however, not only for its ability to render foods more palatable through its sweetness, but also as a powerful medicine. The properties of sugar were thus described in John Trevisa's Middle English translation of *De proprietatibus rerum*:

good sucre is tempred in his qualitees, and hap þerfore ... vertu to druye and to clense, and to dissolue and tempre, and to make þynne and cliere, and to moist þe wombe wipouten eny fretyng or gnawynge, and to clense þe stomak, and to plane and smeþy rowþnesse of þe breste and of þe longen, and to clere þe voys and to don away hosnesse and cowhe, and to restore humour and moisture þat is yspend and ywasted, and to tempre sournesse and bitternesse of smellynge spicery. And is þerfore most profitable in medicynes and in electuaries, in poudres and suripes ...<sup>9</sup>

Its medicinal value was so entirely accepted that Thomas Aquinas considered its consumption in fasting periods legitimate on health grounds.<sup>10</sup> The centrality of sugar to medicinal remedies extended even to its grudging acceptance by those who otherwise rejected imported remedies as 'Apes and japes and marmusettes taylede,/ Nifles, trifles, that litell have availed'.<sup>11</sup> According to the author of *The Libelle of Englyshe Polycye*, a man is quite able to 'voyde infirmyte/ Withoute drugges fet fro beyonde the see', but if there were to be any exception 'It were but sugre'.<sup>12</sup>

This health-giving aspect of sugar has been lost today. For example, whereas 'triacle', a mixture of sugar (or occasionally honey), wine, and herbs, in the medieval period was a highly valued medicine, considered to have almost miraculous curative properties, today's treacle is an inexpensive product, thought more likely to cause dental caries and obesity than to cure illness.<sup>13</sup> Sugar has been reduced in stature to an "everyday" consumable; its place of origin is no longer exotic and it is affordable to

---

<sup>7</sup> John Trevisa, *On the Properties of Things: John Trevisa's Translation of Bartholomæus Anglicus De proprietatibus rerum*, ed. M. C. Seymour (London, 1975), 2: 1090.

<sup>8</sup> For a discussion of the status of sugar in the Middle Ages see C. Rawcliffe, *Medicine and Society in Later Medieval England* (London, 1999), pp. 150-51. No doubt part of the perceived power of sugar came from its exotic origin. The link between the exotic origins of spices and their perceived power is suggested in B. Santich, "'Nondescript Gallimaufries" or Sophisticated Spicings? A Revaluation of Medieval Cuisine', *Petits propos culinaires* 51 (1995): 19.

<sup>9</sup> Trevisa, *On the Properties of Things*, 2: 1091.

<sup>10</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologia*, ed. T. Gilby (London, 1963), 43: 110.

<sup>11</sup> G. Warner (ed.), *The Libelle of Englyshe Polycye: A Poem on the Use of Sea-Power 1436* (Oxford, 1926), p. 18, ll. 348-49.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 19, ll. 366-67, 69.

<sup>13</sup> See, G. Watson, *Theriac and Mithridatum: A Study in Therapeutics* (London, 1976). For examples of treacle being cited as a cure for the plague see BL, MS Egerton 2572, fol. 67v.; R. H. Bowers (ed.), 'De pestilencia', *Southern Folklore Quarterly* 20 (1956): 120; Pickett, 'A Translation of the "Canutus" Plague Treatise', p. 276.



all.<sup>14</sup> It is seen rather as a potential health-hazard, empty calories lacking any true nutritional benefit. Yet, even this status as health-inhibitor means that sugar continues to occupy a somewhat ambiguous position, somewhere between “food” and “non-food”. It functions as gift material (for example, the box of sweets or chocolates given to a hostess or the birthday cake) or on the margins of the “proper” meal (the dessert).<sup>15</sup> Thus, it can be seen that foods exist laden with symbolic meanings, and those meanings are specific to the social and cultural environment in which that food is produced and consumed. Although a food’s nutritional value may be regarded today as a simple, unchangeable scientific fact, in reality this nutritional value cannot be entirely divorced from its symbolic value.

In this chapter I intend to look at one specific nutritional and symbolic aspect of food, its medicinal value. I shall consider the role of food in medieval medicine as the means by which the health of the individual was preserved and attained. To do this I shall examine the nature of medical theories to be found within medical texts circulating within medieval London and York, and assess the nature of the advice they give. I shall also consider whether in the medieval period the role of food in the maintenance of the health of the individual can be seen as possessing any wider social implications.

### **The Classical Inheritance**

In order to understand the relationship between food and health it is necessary to understand the medical theories current in the medieval period. Perhaps the simplest way of identifying cutting-edge medical therapy within any society is to consider the ways in which its medical practitioners treat new or particularly prevalent diseases. The health of the inhabitants of later-medieval England was attacked by a number of epidemics, amongst which the bubonic plague was a key threat. After its onset in 1348-49, the plague recurred intermittently: in the 1360s there were three terrifying outbreaks and in London a further six outbreaks in the 1430s and 1440s.<sup>16</sup> The plague can be seen, therefore, as a particularly medieval disease, and as such likely to be the subject of innovative and intensive medical therapy. Moreover, the medieval city, which brought

---

<sup>14</sup> This is because of the increased ease of transportation and the fact that it is now extracted from home-grown sugar beet. For a thought-provoking study of the changing faces of sugar see S. W. Mintz, *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History* (New York, 1985). Mintz links the changing status of sugar with attitudes towards slavery and the rise of capitalism.

<sup>15</sup> There is an unspoken sense of propriety in the structuring of meals which prohibits the presentation of a sweet dish as a main course: A. Beardsworth and T. Keil, *Sociology on the Menu: An Invitation to the Study of Food and Society* (London, 1997), pp. 242-53.

<sup>16</sup> S. L. Thrupp, *The Merchant Class of Medieval London (1300-1500)* (Michigan, 1962), p. 201.



people into the kind of close proximity ideal for the spread of epidemics, would have provided a thriving medical marketplace in which medical practitioners could compete for their corner of the medical market.<sup>17</sup> In fact, however, little can be found that is wholly new in the multitudes of plague treatises which circulated throughout the Middle Ages and the Renaissance.<sup>18</sup>

Medieval treatments for plague, like the rest of medieval medicine, were based primarily on humoral theory, which had by the Middle Ages a history many centuries old. Like other areas of learning, medieval medical theory was deeply rooted in ancient Greek philosophy, in the humoral theory developed by the philosophers of antiquity. In the fifth century BC, Empedocles argued that the world was made up of four elements - earth, water, fire, and air - suggesting that each particular entity in nature was composed of a combination of these four elements.<sup>19</sup> According to Zeno (fifth century BC) each of these elements manifested itself by its primary qualities - hot, cold, moist, and dry - each element being thought to possess two qualities.<sup>20</sup> Thus the composition of everything in nature could be known through its primary qualities, the balance of which gave any matter its temperament or complexion. At this time, the relationship between natural philosophy and healing was close; these philosophical theories were applied to both the universe at large and the internal make-up and workings of the body. Hence, physiology, health, and disease could be explained in the same way as any other natural phenomena.<sup>21</sup>

---

<sup>17</sup> Barrie Dobson suggests that outbreaks of the Black Death were more severe in the towns than in the country, going so far as to say that it 'may not be too melodramatic to envisage London and the major provincial British towns as the most lethal "death traps" of late medieval society as a whole': B. Dobson, 'General Survey 1300-1540', in D. M. Palliser (ed.), *The Cambridge Urban History of Britain: Volume 1. 600-1500* (Cambridge, 2000), p. 276. Richard Britnell argues that in fact there was little difference between town and country in severity of the Black Death, but it is clear from his argument that medieval city dwellers *felt* themselves to be safer in the country than the city: R. Britnell, 'The Black Death in English Towns', *Urban History* 21 (1994): 202-5. Certainly, two medical manuscripts known to have belonged to rural practitioners contain no treatments for plague, which might suggest that the disease was perceived as more pressingly an urban problem: P. M. Jones, 'Harley MS 2558: A Fifteenth-Century Medical commonplace Book', in M. R. Schleissner (ed.), *Manuscript Sources of Medieval Medicine: A Book of Essays* (London, 1995), pp. 35-54; J. K. Mustain, 'A Rural Medical Practitioner in Fifteenth Century England', *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 46 (1972): 469-76. In the early-modern period the city has been seen as a vigorously competing medical marketplace: H. J. Cook, *The Decline of the Old Medical Regime in Stuart London* (London, 1986).

<sup>18</sup> For a catalogue of medieval plague treatises see, Singer, 'Some Plague Tractates', pp. 159-212.

<sup>19</sup> For a clear and comprehensive account of the medical theories of ancient Greece see V. Nutton, 'Medicine in the Greek World, 800-50 BC', in L. I. Conrad *et al.* (eds.), *The Western Medical Tradition: 800 BC to AD 1800* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 11-38.

<sup>20</sup> M. Weiss Adamson, *Medieval Dietetics: Food and Drink in Regimen sanitatis Literature from 800-1400*, ed. M. Kuxdorf (Frankfurt Am Main, 1995), p. 11.

<sup>21</sup> Nutton, 'Medicine in the Greek World', p. 17.



Early Greek medicine is known to us today through the Hippocratic Corpus, a body of about sixty medical works attributed to Hippocrates, written mainly between 420 and 350 BC.<sup>22</sup> These texts established the link between the four qualities and the four bodily fluids or humours: blood, black bile, yellow bile, and phlegm. These same ideas about the four humours can be seen in this verse compendium of astrological medicine from the late-fourteenth century, probably belonging to Richard Thorpe, a York Augustinian friar:

And of thir iiij homers comys qualities sere,  
After that thai haue mygt in man & powere.  
Sanguine is the fyrst, the ij fleumatik;  
The iij is malancole, the iiij coleryk.<sup>23</sup>

This concept of the humours, qualities, and temperaments formed a prototype of a humoral pathology. *De natura hominis* (c. 400 BC) suggested that in the body the four qualities should be in balance and for the first time listed the four humours as the agents responsible for health and illness.<sup>24</sup> The common idea was that health and illness were the result of some form of balance and imbalance.<sup>25</sup> This idea of humoral balance can be seen, for example, in Trevisa's translation of *De proprietatibus rerum*:

Þise foure humours, if þey beþ in euene proporcioun in quantite and qualite, he fedip alle bodyes þat haþ blood and makeþ hem parfite and kepip in þe beinge and state of helpe; as aʒenwards, if þey beþ vneuen in proporcioun and infecte, þanne þey bredip eueles.<sup>26</sup>

The centrality of the concept of balance meant that ancient Greek medicine focused primarily upon the means of maintaining a state of equilibrium with the humours. Imbalance could result in sickness and perhaps even death. Consequently, Greek physicians practised, on the whole, a form of preventive medicine, known as dietetic medicine, from the Greek '*diaita*' meaning 'mode of life'. Whereas today dietetic treatment refers only to treatment concerned with the consumption of food and drink, in both ancient Greek and medieval thinking it referred to a much broader spectrum of lifestyle issues of which food was but a small (though very important) part.

<sup>22</sup> Nutton, 'Medicine in the Greek World', p. 21.

<sup>23</sup> Transcribed in L. R. Mooney, 'A Middle English Verse Compendium of Astrological Medicine', *Medical History* 28 (1984): 412.

<sup>24</sup> Weiss Adamson, *Medieval Dietetics*, p. 11.

<sup>25</sup> Nutton, 'Medicine in the Greek World', p. 23.

<sup>26</sup> Trevisa, *On the Properties of Things*, 1: 148.



The first line of therapeutics was food, rest, and exercise, then drugs, and finally, as a last resort, surgery.<sup>27</sup>

Humoral theory had its strongest impact on medieval medicine in the form given to it by Galen (AD 129-c.216).<sup>28</sup> Central to his medical theories were the *res naturales*, *res non naturales*, and the *res praeter naturales*.<sup>29</sup> The Naturals were considered to be those things of which the body is composed and enable it to exist (e.g., humours, bodily parts, spirits, etc.). The Contra-Naturals were considered to be pathological things (e.g., the cause and symptoms of an illness). The Non-Naturals were considered to be those things which made up the physical, social, and moral surroundings of the individual. They were divided into six groups: air and environment; food and drink; exercise and rest; sleep and wakefulness; retention and evacuation of waste matter (which included sexual intercourse); and disturbances of the mind.<sup>30</sup> These concepts remained central to medical thinking for well over a thousand years.

How did these classical ways of thinking find their way into medieval medical theories? Classical medical theory survived the collapse of the great Mediterranean empires through its preservation by Arab physicians, who translated into Arabic and saved many classical texts which might otherwise have been lost.<sup>31</sup> In the eighth and ninth centuries an enormous body of Greek works were collected and translated at Baghdad's so-called 'House of Wisdom'.<sup>32</sup> In the tenth century, following this period of

<sup>27</sup> I. M. Lonie, 'A Structural Pattern in Greek Dietetics and the Early History of Greek Medicine', *Medical History* 21(1977): 235-39.

<sup>28</sup> Weiss Adamson, *Medieval Dietetics*, p. 13. Galen modified some of Hippocrates' thinking on matters such as the effects of specific food types on the body because differences between the Greek and Roman diets: the Roman diet contained a much higher percentage of meat of different species: I. Mazzini, 'Diet and Medicine in the Ancient world', in J.-L. Flandrin and M. Montanari (eds.), *Food: A Culinary History from Antiquity to the Present* (Harmondsworth, 1999), p. 150.

<sup>29</sup> For a full discussion of these concepts see L. J. Rather, 'The "Six Things Non-Natural": A Note on the Origins and the Fate of a Doctrine and a Phrase', *Clio Medica* 3 (1968): 337-47; J. J. Bylebyl, 'Galen on the Non-Natural Causes and Variations in the Pulse', *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 45 (1971): 482-85; P. H. Neibyl, 'The Non-Naturals', *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 45 (1971): 486-92.

<sup>30</sup> Rather, 'The "Six Things Non-Natural"', pp. 337-39.

<sup>31</sup> For a discussion of medieval-Arabic medicine see L. I. Conrad, 'The Arab-Islamic Medical Tradition', in Conrad (ed.), *The Western Medical Tradition*, pp. 93-138; J. C. Bürgel, 'Secular and Religious Features of Medieval Arabic Medicine', in C. Leslie (ed.), *Asian Medical Systems: A Comparative Study* (London, 1976), pp. 44-62.

<sup>32</sup> C. H. Talbot, *Medicine in Medieval Europe* (London, 1967), p. 24. A key figure in this process was Johannitus, whose authority was treated with reverence by physicians throughout the medieval period: Conrad, 'The Arab-Islamic Medical Tradition', pp. 106-8.



translation, the Arabs began producing writings of their own.<sup>33</sup> This period saw the rise of the medical compendium, which provided ready access to information across the whole range of an expanding discipline. The next important stage in the history of Western medicine was the translation of these texts from Arabic into Latin, in which the School of Salerno played no small part.<sup>34</sup> By 1150 translations of Graeco-Arabic medical works had spread widely in Italy and beyond, putting the Latin-speaking world in touch with the tradition of Hippocratic learning as promoted by Galen and as extended by the Arabs.<sup>35</sup>

These translations of Graeco-Arabic medical knowledge became the foundations of the medical curriculum as taught at the medical faculties at Montpellier, Padua, Paris, and, later, Oxford and Cambridge. Of particular influence in the Western world was Johannitius' *Isagoge*, which provided the framework of diagnosis and therapeutics.<sup>36</sup> It placed heavy emphasis on Galen's Non-Naturals, suggesting that without due attention illness would result from humoral imbalance. By regulating the Non-Naturals the body could be protected from predictable changes (such as seasonal changes). This resulted in the rise in popularity of the *regimen sanitatis*, designed primarily to preserve health, but also to heal the sick, by describing what foods and drinks, exercise, rest, environments, evacuations, and emotional states would best preserve or restore an individual's health.<sup>37</sup> The physician prescribing the *regimen sanitatis* was, as Galen had envisaged him, a long-term adviser to his (relatively few) patients, who used his knowledge and training to understand the changes in his patient.<sup>38</sup> Such individual medical treatment

---

<sup>33</sup> Talbot, *Medicine in Medieval England*, p. 25. The great names from this period include Rhazes, Haly Abbas, and, the most famous of them all, Avicenna, who organised Galen's writings into a definitive system governed by Aristotelian philosophy in his *Canon*, which was translated into Latin in the twelfth century: Conrad, 'The Arab-Islamic Medical tradition', pp. 113-15. Extracts of Avicenna's *Canon* in English are available in E. Grant (ed.), *A Source Book in Medieval Science* (Cambridge, Mass., 1974), pp. 715-20. Avicenna's *Canon* was the final codification of Graeco-Arabic medicine, following which the intellectual axis of Islam moved to the West, where Spain produced renowned writers such as Albucasis, Avenzoar, Averroes, and Maimonides: Talbot, *Medicine in Medieval England*, pp. 31-32.

<sup>34</sup> For a history of the School of Salerno see P. O. Kristeller, 'The School of Salerno: Its Development and Its Contribution to the History of Learning', in P. O. Kristeller (ed.), *Studies in Renaissance Thought and Letters* (Rome, 1969), pp. 495-51. One of the most famous names associated with Salerno is Constantinus Africanus. Amongst the works he translated were Haly Abbas' *Pantegni*, Hippocrates *Aphorisms* and *Prognostica*, Johannitius' *Isagoge*, and several of the treatises of Galen: *ibid.*, pp. 508-9; V. Nutton, 'Medicine in Medieval Western Europe, 1000-1500', in Conrad (ed.), *The Western Medical Tradition*, pp. 140-41.

<sup>35</sup> Nutton, 'Medicine in Medieval Western Europe', pp. 140-41.

<sup>36</sup> Extracts from Johannitius' *Isagoge* in English translation are available in Grant (ed.), *Source Book*, pp. 705-14.

<sup>37</sup> Nutton, 'Medicine in Medieval Western Europe', p. 141. For a methodical analysis of *regimina sanitatis* from the Roman period to 1400 see Weiss Adamson, *Medieval Dietetics*.

<sup>38</sup> Nutton, 'The Seeds of Disease', p. 16.



was highly labour intensive, and therefore expensive. The physician was required to know every detail of the patient's lifestyle - his habits, environment, moods, etc. - in order to consider the ways in which they interacted with his unique complexion.

Moreover, the patient had to live the kind of lifestyle in which the manipulation of the Non-Naturals was a viable possibility. As a result, *regimina* were written with a specific individual in mind, usually from the nobility or royalty, as in the case of the one written by Arnald of Villanova at the beginning of the fourteenth century for Jaume II, King of Aragon.<sup>39</sup> *Regimina sanitatis* were particularly suitable for the nobility because of the belief of medieval physicians that they had their own peculiar bodily complexion, which came into being at the moment of conception and was hereditary. By contrast the non-nobility all shared a common nature and as a result the treatment for preserving their health did not require the same degree of individual attention.<sup>40</sup>

The role of food in the *regimen sanitatis* was highly significant. For example, in the *regimen* written for Jaume II, eleven of the eighteen chapters concentrate on the types of food and drink which should be consumed in order to maintain good health. Clearly, therefore, food was considered to have medicinal properties by the upper strata of society, but to what extent were these views current in the rest of society? In order to answer this question it is necessary to ascertain whether the same learned medical theories circulated lower down the social spectrum. Consequently, I shall consider the standard of education of the medical practitioners involved in the treatment of the greater mass of medieval society and the texts used by them.

## Medical Practitioners

The traditional view of medieval medical practitioner has been that of an educated elite engaged in a profitable and highly-regarded profession.<sup>41</sup> Such a view is a result, to some extent, of the nature of the evidence available for study: written

<sup>39</sup> Arnald of Villanova, *Regimen sanitatis ad regem Aragonum*, ed. L. García-Ballester and M. R. McVaugh, *Arnaldi de Villanova opera medica omnia*, 10.i (Barcelona, 1996), pp. 423-70.

<sup>40</sup> L. García-Ballester, 'Dietetic and Pharmacological Therapy: A Dilemma Among Fourteenth-Century Practitioners in the Montpellier Area', in W. F. Bynum and V. Nutton (eds.), *Essays in the History of Therapeutics*, *Clio Medica* 22 (1991), p. 24.

<sup>41</sup> See, for example, C. Rawcliffe, 'The Profits of Practice: The Wealth and Status of Medical Men in Later Medieval England', *Social History Of Medicine* 1 (1988): 61-78; E. A. Hammond, 'Incomes of Medieval English Doctors', *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences* 15 (1960): 154-69. In my study of medieval medical practitioners I have not made use of R. S. Gottfried, *Doctors and Medicine in Medieval England 1340-1530* (Princeton, 1986) because of the large number of errors it has been shown to contain. See F. M. Getz's review in *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 61 (1987): 455-61.



documents which tend to concern those at the higher end of the scale.<sup>42</sup> The majority of the information available concerns those at the top rung of the ladder, the university-educated physician.<sup>43</sup> Medicine existed at the English universities only as a higher degree, which means that before commencing medical studies a scholar would have already spent eight years studying and teaching the arts. The student was then required to spend four years studying medicine before gaining his B.M. and a further two before gaining his D.M.<sup>44</sup> Learned medicine was the study of the Aristotelian natural philosophical system. It was not based on practical experimentation but rather the study of learned discourse. Studied first were texts on logic and the natural sciences, then Greek and Arabic texts on medical matters translated into Latin, including the works of Galen, Johannitius, and Hippocrates.<sup>45</sup>

It is to such a learned background that Chaucer's Physician belongs. His description in 'The General Prologue' as 'Doctour' marks him out as a university graduate, and also shows respect for his learning.<sup>46</sup> He wears the long 'sangwyn' gown which distinguished the graduate physicians from the non-graduate barber-surgeons.<sup>47</sup> As a university graduate, he knows the standard medical texts, both of the ancient authorities (Aesclepius, Dioscorides, Rufus of Ephesus, Hippocrates, Haly Abbas, Galen, Serapion, Rhazes, Avicenna, Averroes, John of Damascus, Constantinus Africanus) and the more modern (Bernard of Gordon, John of Gaddesden, Gilbertus Anglicus).<sup>48</sup> Even his 'Tale' reveals his university education: by citing Titus Livius as

---

<sup>42</sup> Sources of information on medieval medical practitioners include university records, records of payments, wills, guild registers, and legal records. Two works based on just such sources and invaluable to those wishing to study medical practitioners in the medieval period are C. H. Talbot and E. A. Hammond, *The Medical Practitioners in Medieval England: A Biographical Register* (London, 1965); and F. Getz, 'Medical Practitioners in Medieval England', *Social History of Medicine* 3 (1990): 245-83.

<sup>43</sup> The centres of text-based medical learning shifted from the monastic setting to the new universities of Oxford and Cambridge in the thirteenth century: E. A. Hammond, 'Physicians in Medieval English Religious Houses', *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 32 (1958): 105. F. Getz, *Medicine in the English Middle Ages* (Princeton, 1998), p. 15. The first recorded medical graduates at Oxford date from the early years of the fourteenth century, the same date from which there are the earliest surviving statutes regularising medical study: F. Getz, 'The Faculty of Medicine Before 1500', in J. I. Catto and R. Evans (eds.), *The History of the University of Oxford* (Oxford, 1992), 2: 381.

<sup>44</sup> V. L. Bullough, 'Medical Study at Medieval Oxford', *Speculum* 36 (1961): 605.

<sup>45</sup> Getz, 'Faculty of Medicine', p. 373.

<sup>46</sup> Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Riverside Chaucer*, ed. L. D. Benson, 3<sup>rd</sup> edn (Oxford, 1987), p. 30, l. 411. V. L. Bullough, 'The Term "Doctor"', *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences* 18 (1963): 284-87.

<sup>47</sup> Chaucer, *Riverside Chaucer*, p. 30, l. 439. V. L. Bullough, 'Training of the Nonuniversity-Educated Medical Practitioner in the Later Middle Ages', *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences* 14 (1959): 447.

<sup>48</sup> Chaucer, *Riverside Chaucer*, p. 30, ll. 429-434. For a discussion of the texts studied by medical students at Oxford and the medical contents of the university's medieval library see Bullough, 'Medical Study', pp. 606-8.



his authority he shows his training in the arts, while his sermonising at its conclusion betrays the theological grounding of his studies, despite the claim that his 'studie was but litel on the Bible'.<sup>49</sup>

As the medical texts studied by physicians considered an individual patient's health to be dependent upon the influences of the cosmos, it is unsurprising to discover that the Physician is 'grounded in astronomye' as well as knowing 'the cause of everich maladye'.<sup>50</sup> In general he is presented as an efficient practitioner, although possessing a notable love of 'gold'.<sup>51</sup> In contrast to other more directly satirised physicians, who are not only avaricious but also fail to cure their patients, Chaucer's Physician at least seems to have his patients 'boote' at his fingertips.<sup>52</sup> Indeed, he would appear to have considerable confidence in his own medical abilities as he follows his own advice, consuming a 'diete mesurable/ ... of no superfluitee/ But of greet norissyng and digestible'.<sup>53</sup> Nevertheless, despite all this praise of the Physician as practitioner, there is a hint of a problem with his lack of practical training in the lines:

In al this world ne was ther noon him lik,  
To speke of phisik and of surgerye,  
For he was grounded in astronomye.<sup>54</sup>

The implication here would appear to be that he is the best in the world propounding medical theories, but perhaps not the most practically adept, as a result of the lack of practical experience involved in university training.

In general, the fact that the small English medical faculties were directed towards producing scholars better suited to teaching than practising medicine meant that few of those graduating in medicine actually went on to practice it, although, there is

---

<sup>49</sup> Chaucer, *Riverside Chaucer*, p. 190, l. 1; p. 193, ll. 277-86; p. 30, l. 438. Medicine was often studied as a precursor to a doctorate in theology, or as a minor subject as an adjunct to a theological course: Bullough, 'Medical Study', pp. 604-5.

<sup>50</sup> Chaucer, *Riverside Chaucer*, p. 30, ll. 414-21. Getz, 'Faculty of Medicine', p. 375. The York Barber-Surgeon's Guild Book (BL, MS Egerton 2572) locates the human body firmly within the wider context of the universe, paying great attention to the zodiac and the attributes of the planets, and their influence on the life of man. The text includes a zodiac man (fol. 47v), a volvelle for making astrological calculations (fol. 50r), the qualities of the zodiac (fol. 51r), zodiac charts (fols. 51v-56r), lists of dog days when it was considered dangerous to administer medicines (fol. 55v-56r), and a description of the formation of a child according to the various zodiac signs (fol. 60r).

<sup>51</sup> Chaucer, *Riverside Chaucer*, p. 30, l. 444.

<sup>52</sup> Chaucer, *Riverside Chaucer*, p. 30, ll. 424. An example of a satirical description of the physician can be found in *The Romaunt of the Rose*: Chaucer, *Riverside Chaucer*, pp. 746-47, ll. 5721-44. The arguments of scholars who see Chaucer's Physician as a stock character whose only function is to satirise the medical profession is refuted in H. E. Ussery, *Chaucer's Physician: Medicine and Literature in Fourteenth-Century England* (New Orleans, 1971), pp. 91-117.

<sup>53</sup> Chaucer, *Riverside Chaucer*, p. 30, ll. 435-37. Indeed, Chaucer's description of his physician could be drawn from Trevisa's definition of the physician: Trevisa, *On the Properties of Things*, 1: 435-39.

<sup>54</sup> Chaucer, *Riverside Chaucer*, p. 30, ll. 412-14.



evidence for medical practitioners who studied medicine at English universities, but who did not go on to graduate.<sup>55</sup> Although graduate physicians were academically the most highly qualified, their contribution to health care in the medieval city was probably, in real terms, small. In part this was due to the fact that the major cities, unlike on the continent; Oxford and Cambridge were located in slow-growing boroughs. They certainly could not hope to monopolise the medical marketplace in large cities such as London and York.<sup>56</sup> Certainly, a survey of medical care in York in the later Middle Ages produced no conclusive evidence for a single graduate lay physician operating in the York area.<sup>57</sup>

---

<sup>55</sup> Philip Stell notes that in Talbot and Hammond, *Medical Practitioners*, there are references to fewer than 100 graduates from Oxford and Cambridge before 1518: P. Stell, 'Medical Care in Late Medieval York' (Unpublished MA Diss., University of York, 1995), p. 7. T. Aston suggests that there were only 157 medical students recorded at Oxford during the whole of the Middle Ages: T. H. Aston, 'Oxford's Medieval Alumni', *Past and Present* 74 (1977): 10. Nancy Siraisi finds evidence for only 40 medical masters and students at Oxford in the fourteenth century, all of whom were beneficed clergy or members of religious orders, for whom medicine was subordinate to other intellectual interests and career activities: N. G. Siraisi, *Medieval and Early Renaissance Medicine: An Introduction to Knowledge and Practice* (London, 1990), p. 56. One medical practitioner who enjoyed a university education but did not graduate is ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> rural medical practitioner, Thomas Fayreford. He clearly made use of his medical instruction at Oxford in the composition of his commonplace book: Jones, 'Harley MS 2558', pp. 35-54; P. M. Jones, 'Thomas Fayreford: An English Fifteenth Century Medical Practitioner', in R. French *et al.* (eds.), *Medicine from the Black Death to the French Disease* (Aldershot, 1998), pp. 156-83. In addition, of course, medical practitioners might be graduates from continental universities: Talbot and Hammond, *Medical Practitioners*, *passim*.

<sup>56</sup> V. L. Bullough, 'Population and the Study and Practice of Medieval Medicine', *Bulletin of Medical History* 36 (1962): 62-69. The universities attempted to exert some kind of control over medical practice in London in a petition to the Crown in 1421 which demanded that 'no man of no manner of estate, degree or condition practise in Physick from this time forward, but he have long time used to Schools of Physick within some University, and be graduated in the same': R. T. Beck, *The Cutting Edge: Early History of the Surgeons of London* (London, 1987), p. 62. This particular petition was not successful, but a subsequent petition to the mayor resulted in the foundation of a conjoint College of Physicians and Surgeons in 1423. In reality, the College had little effect and eighteen months later had collapsed as a result of the strength of the Barbers' Company: *ibid.*, pp. 62-63, 70.

<sup>57</sup> P. Stell, *Medical Practice in Medieval York*, Borthwick Paper 90 (York, 1996), p. 3. There has been a tendency to assume that from the twelfth century graduate medical students in orders did not practice medicine because of various injunctions, but it has been suggested that these injunctions were selective and had little real effect on practice: D. W. Amundsen, 'Medieval Canon Law on Medical and Surgical Practice by the Clergy', *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 52 (1978): 22-43. Certainly the Augustinian friars at York had in their library many medical texts including the works of Hippocrates, Galen, Avicenna, Johannitius, Constantinus Africanus, and Bernard of Gordon: M. R. James, 'The Catalogue of the Library of the Augustinian Friars at York: Now First Edited from the Manuscript at Trinity College Dublin', in *Fasciculus Joanni Willis clark dicatus* (Cambridge, 1909), pp. 2-92. Similar problems exist regarding the secular clergy. William Duffield, a York residentiary canon, bequeathed in his will several medical books including John Gaddesden's *Rosa medicinae*, Averroes' *Colliget*, Constantinus Africanus' *Viaticum*, and two copies of Johannitius' *Isagoge*, but whether he ever actively practised medicine is unknown: J. B. Friedman, 'Books, Owners and Makers in Fifteenth Century Yorkshire: The Evidence from Some Wills and Extant Manuscripts', in A. J. Minnis (ed.), *Latin and Vernacular: Studies in Late-Medieval Texts and Manuscripts* (Cambridge, 1989), pp. 117-18.



Of greater influence in society at large were the multitudes of barbers, barber-surgeons, and surgeons within the city.<sup>58</sup> Although barber-surgeons have tended to be regarded as members of a trade rather than a profession, it has been suggested that this is a false distinction, for, just like the physicians, they were concerned to regulate practice and ensure standards of medical care.<sup>59</sup> The precise nature of their instruction is unclear, but appears to have taken the form of a practical apprenticeship lasting seven years.<sup>60</sup> This does not mean to say that they did not feel the need for a theoretical grounding to their practice. The fifteenth-century Middle English translation of the surgical treatise by the famous French surgeon Guy de Chauliac compares the surgeon who ‘knoweþ nouȝt anothmye’ to a blind man cutting a tree.<sup>61</sup> Certainly it is clear from the books that barber-surgeons left in their wills, often to their apprentices and Companies, that written knowledge was highly valued and considered worth handing down.<sup>62</sup>

As a group the barber-surgeons were a powerful force to be reckoned with. They overthrew the authority of the conjoint Company, established by the university-educated physicians, and reasserted their own autonomy less than eighteen months after its inception.<sup>63</sup> Undoubtedly this was in part due to the much greater numbers of the barber-surgeons, but it might also be attributed to the a close relationship between the barber-

---

<sup>58</sup> Although theoretically a distinction existed between these practitioners in reality these terms were very fluid: Getz, *Medicine in the English Middle Ages*, p. 8. Therefore, for the sake of simplicity, I will use the term barber-surgeon when referring to this group of practitioners in general. There was also a similar fluidity between the practice of surgeons and physicians. For example, the York Barber-Surgeons Guild Book gives advice as to when it was perilous to give medicines, suggesting that they may have been dispensing medications: BL, MS Egerton 2572, fol. 59v.

<sup>59</sup> M. Pelling, ‘Medical Practice in Early Modern England: Trade or Profession?’, in W. Prest (ed.), *The Professions in Early Modern England* (London, 1987), pp.90-128. See the regulations of the London Guild of Surgeons, transcribed in Beck, *Cutting Edge*, pp. 130-35; and the York Barber’s Ordinances, transcribed in Stell, ‘Medical care’, pp. 141-46.

<sup>60</sup> Bullough, ‘The Nonuniversity-Educated Medical Practitioner’, p. 453.

<sup>61</sup> M. S. Ogden (ed.), *The Cyrurgie of Guy de Chauliac*, EETS, OS 265 (London, 1971), p. 27.

<sup>62</sup> For example, John Morested (1421) left his apothecary a book by Lanfranc; John Dagvyle (1487) left John Hert, another London surgeon, his ‘lesse boke callyd Guyde’ and to ‘the Comunalte of my felyshyp of surgeons of London’ his ‘grete boke callyd Guydo’ (probably works by Guy de Chauliac); Richard Esty (1476) left the ‘fellowshipp of the Barbours of London’ seven books of surgery; and Thomas Colard (1481) left his son ‘the boke the whiche is called rosse’ (probably Gaddesden’s *Rosa Anglica*) and a book called Constantyne, both of which were ‘of fysyk and surgery’, for use in his lifetime and ‘afterward to be gyvyn unto the halle of Barboure there to be leyde in the lyberary the soule of Thomas Colard to be prayed for and the name to be set upon them’: Beck, *Cutting Edge*, pp. 100, 142, 165, 166. From a slightly later period there is evidence of Robert Balthrop (1591), a surgeon, acting as translator of the works of Tagault and Paré. Moreover in his will he makes it clear that barber-surgeons made use of written texts: ‘I have written into English for the love that I owe unto my brethren practising chirurgery and not understanding the Latin tongue and given them into the Hall for their daily use and reading both in Latin and English’. Cited in M. Pelling and C. Webster, ‘Medical Practitioners’, in C. Webster (ed.), *Health, Medicine and Mortality in the Sixteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1979), p. 177.

<sup>63</sup> Beck, *Cutting Edge*, p. 70.



surgeons and the City at large.<sup>64</sup> Almost without exception the wills of barber-surgeons transcribed by Beck show a concern with charitable responsibilities within the city, such as feeding and clothing the poor and prisoners, repairing roads and bridges, the building and repair of chapels, and donations to hospitals.<sup>65</sup> Moreover, the barber-surgeons' shops might also be the site of social interaction. Many barber-surgeons were also involved in the victualling and brewing trades, and barber-surgeons shops were associated with musical entertainment.<sup>66</sup> Certainly, barber-surgeons were more involved with the everyday life of the city than were the learned elite, the university-educated physicians.

Nevertheless, the barbers-surgeons were only one of the many practitioners that the city dweller might consult. Other qualified practitioners included the apothecaries, who, as well as providing the medicines prescribed by others, were also involved in the direct treatment of patients.<sup>67</sup> In reality, however, these qualified medical practitioners probably represent the top level of those who carried out medical treatment within the city. Those multitudes of carers who looked after the health of those lower down the social ladder have left no mention in the historical record and consequently one can only speculate about their activities. Thus, my conclusions on the nature of medical knowledge circulating within the lower sectors of society, which are necessarily drawn from documentation, may not necessarily reflect the full picture.

### Medical Texts

If, as suggested above, barber-surgeons were the medical practitioners (about whom we have written documentation) most involved with urban citizens, then it is probable that the medical theories to which they adhered were those most common in

<sup>64</sup> A recent study has examined the role of London medical practitioners as craftsmen and has considered their relationship with the civic authorities: I. Fay, 'Medical Practitioners and the Civic Body: Negotiating Healing Authority in Late Medieval London' (Unpublished MA Diss., York University, 2001).

<sup>65</sup> Beck, *Cutting Edge*, pp. 95-104, 136-44, 158-68.

<sup>66</sup> The vestiges of which can be seen today in the barber-shop quartet: Pelling, 'Medical Practice', pp. 102-5; M. Pelling, 'Occupational Diversity: Barbersurgeons and the Trade of Norwich, 1550-1640', *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 5 (1982): 505-8.

<sup>67</sup> P. M. Stell, 'The Apothecaries of Medieval York', *York Historian* 14 (1997): 26-31. As Katherine Park suggests, the hallmark of medieval medical care was its variety: K. Park, 'Medicine and Society in Medieval Europe, 500-1500', in A. Wear (ed.), *Medicine in Society: Historical Essays* (Cambridge, 1993), p. 59.



society at large.<sup>68</sup> Thus, one should be able to gather an idea of the medical theories current in the medieval city from the medical texts owned by these urban practitioners. Such information can be discovered from the texts bequeathed by them in their wills; these texts include the works of Lanfranc, John of Arderne, John Gaddesden, Constantinus Africanus, as well as numerous anonymous tracts on surgery, anatomy, and therapeutics.<sup>69</sup> Indications of ownership can also be gleaned occasionally from medical manuscripts themselves. For example, BL, MS Sloane 5 (a medical compendium written in Latin, Anglo-Norman, and Middle English containing a gynaecological text, Gilbertus Anglicus' *Compendium medicinae*, Galen's *De sectis*, a herbal, a lunary, a treatise on apostemes, and a treatise on urinalysis) is inscribed '*Iste liber constat Ricardo Dod de London Barbor Sorion*', whom Getz identifies as a later-fifteenth-century barber-surgeon.<sup>70</sup> Richard Dod is also associated with a fifteenth-century, Middle English uroscopy text, Henry Daniel's *Liber uricrisiarum*, whose prologue states, '*Hic incipit prologus in Liber Uricrisiarum Ricardi Dod*'.<sup>71</sup> Likewise the translator of Cambridge, MS Gonville and Caius College 176/97 (a fifteenth-century codex in Latin and Middle English, containing a phlebotomy text, mathematical, astrological, and astronomical writings, medical recipes, and an introduction to the concepts of Galen's *Tegni* as set out by Johannitius) states that he has prepared this text for 'myn dere gossip thomas plawdon, citiseyn and barbour of london', whom Voigts and McVaugh identify as a barber-surgeon of the parish of All Hallows the Great, who

---

<sup>68</sup> Inevitably, in any period there will be some disjunction between written medical theory and actual practice, indeed, it has been suggested that the medieval medical practitioner would have had to deal with so many variables in diagnosis, prognosis, and treatment that adherence to medieval medical theory would have been impossible: J. M. Riddle, 'Theory and Practice in Medieval Medicine', *Viator* 5 (1974): 157-84. I think, however, a case study made of the eating habits of Chinese immigrants living in London might prove a useful counter-argument to this claim. This study looked at the ways in which these Chinese families continued to follow a pragmatic version of the traditional system of equilibrium which has dominated Chinese medicine for centuries. This Chinese system is fundamentally the same as that suggested by medieval medical texts: foods are attributed different qualities (e.g., hot and cold) which can be altered by methods of cooking, and these qualities interact with the temperament of the individual which varies according to age, season, etc. In this study not only was it found that foods continued to be chosen and prepared according to the traditional system, but Western foods were incorporated into this value system: E. Wheeler and T. S. Poh, 'Food for Equilibrium: The Dietary Principles and Practice of Chinese Families in London', in A. Murcott (ed.), *The Sociology of Food and Eating: Essays on the Sociological Significance of Food* (Aldershot, 1983), pp. 84-94.

<sup>69</sup> See, for example, Talbot and Hammond, *Medical Practitioners*, pp. 74-75, 337-38.

<sup>70</sup> The inscription appears on fol. 156r. The manuscript is discussed in R. H. Robbins, 'Medical Manuscripts in Middle English', *Speculum* 45 (1970): 410; Talbot, *Medicine in Medieval England*, p. 187; Getz, 'Medical Practitioners', p. 274.

<sup>71</sup> R. Hanna III, 'Henry Daniel's *Liber uricrisiarum* (Excerpt)', in L. M. Matheson (ed.), *Popular and Practical Science of Medieval England* (East Lansing, 1994), p. 192.



died in 1413.<sup>72</sup> Occasionally, urban medical knowledge can also be indicated by the existence of an official organisation's medical texts, as, for example, in the case of the Guild Book of the York Barber-Surgeons.<sup>73</sup>

Perhaps the best indication of the medical theories prevalent in the lower echelons of society might be gained from vernacular medical texts. In late-medieval England the number of people literate in the vernacular was increasing rapidly; accompanying this growth in literacy, inevitably, was a growth in written material available in the vernacular.<sup>74</sup> From 1375, England experienced a remarkable increase in the amount of practical advice available in English, including works on grammar, cookery, table manners, horticulture, etc.<sup>75</sup> Of particular significance were works on medical matters.<sup>76</sup> In fact, medical writings represent the first substantial body of academic writing to be translated from Latin into English.<sup>77</sup> Although in the past there was a tendency to see distinction between the contents of (learned) Latin texts and vernacular (folk medicine) texts, the work of Linda Voigts has shown this distinction to be false.<sup>78</sup> Even the most learned of medical treatises were translated into Middle English. For example, BL, MS Sloane 6 contains Middle English translations of some of

<sup>72</sup> L. E. Voigts and M. R. McVaugh, 'A Latin Technical Phlebotomy and its Middle English Translations', *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society* 74 (1984): 15 and 24; M. R. James, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Library of Gonville and Caius College* (Cambridge, 1907), 1: 202. Voigts has suggested the existence of a workshop in London or Westminster in the mid-fifteenth century responsible for producing scientific and medical texts for such an audience: L. E. Voigts, 'The "Sloane Group": Related Scientific and Medical Manuscripts from the Fifteenth Century in the Sloane Collection', *British Library Journal* 16 (1990): 26-57.

<sup>73</sup> BL, MS Egerton 2572.

<sup>74</sup> C. P. Christianson, 'A Century of the Manuscript-Book Trade in Late Medieval London', *Medievalia et humanistica*, NS 12 (1984): 144; J. H. Fisher, 'Chaucer and the Written Language', in T. J. Heffernan (ed.), *The Popular Literature of Medieval England* (Knoxville, 1985), p. 237. For the rise in status of English see J. H. Fisher, 'Chancery and the Emergence of Standard Written English in the Fifteenth Century', *Speculum* 52 (1977): 870-99; J. H. Fisher, 'Chancery Standard and Modern Written English', *Journal of the Society of Archivists* 6 (1979): 136-44.

<sup>75</sup> F. M. Getz, 'Charity, Translation and the Language of Medical Learning in Medieval England', *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 64 (1990): 3.

<sup>76</sup> Bennett claims that the growth of vernacular literature in the fifteenth century was nowhere more notable than in the multiplication of medical manuscripts: H. S. Bennett, 'Science and Information in English Writings of the Fifteenth Century', *Modern Language Review* 39 (1944): 3.

<sup>77</sup> L. E. Voigts, 'Editing Middle English Texts: Needs and Issues', in T. H. Levere, *Editing Texts in the History of Science and Medicine: Papers Given at the Seventeenth Annual Conference on Editorial Problems University of Toronto, 6-7 November 1981* (London, 1982), p. 52.

<sup>78</sup> For an example of the learned/ non-learned distinction see Robbins, 'Medical Manuscripts', p. 394. For Voigts' alternative reading see Voigts, 'Editing Middle English Texts', pp. 39-68; L. E. Voigts, 'Medical Prose', in A. S. G. Edwards (ed.), *Middle English Prose: A Critical Guide to Major Authors and Genres* (New Brunswick, 1984), pp. 315-55. In the process of attempting to construct a Middle English equivalent of Thorndike and Kibre's catalogue of *incipits* of Latin medieval scientific writings, Voigts and Kurtz have discovered approximately 7,500 witnesses to medical and scientific texts in Middle English: L. E. Voigts, 'Multitudes of Middle English Medical Manuscripts, or the Englishing of Science and Medicine',



Galen's highly theoretical writings.<sup>79</sup> No clear-cut division between Latin and vernacular texts can be described, as the majority of vernacular medical texts spring from the learned Latin tradition.<sup>80</sup> More importantly for my argument, ownership of vernacular translations of very learned Latin texts can be traced to non-university-educated medical practitioners. For example, the manuscript thought to have belonged to the non-university-educated barber-surgeon, Thomas Plawdon, contains learned material attributed to authorities such as Galen, Avicenna, and Johannitius.<sup>81</sup> Similarly, a treatise in BL, MS Egerton 2433 opens, 'Here begynns a tretys of surgery after Galyan the gud leche and he compellys this boke owt of Latyn into ynglys because he had a gud frend that understod no latyn and thys tretes tellys of the pestelens'.<sup>82</sup> Presumably, the 'gud frend' here described is a non-university-educated medical practitioner.

Thus, one of the intended audiences for vernacular medical texts was clearly those who were literate but unable to read Latin, the translation into the vernacular of learned medical texts marking an widening of the audience requiring these texts.<sup>83</sup> The effects of this on the medical marketplace were potentially profound and can be seen to reveal a democratisation of medical practice. While medical knowledge was enshrined in Latin, and hence incomprehensible to the vast majority of the laity, there was no

---

in M. R. Schleissner (ed.), *Manuscript Sources of Medieval Medicine: A Book of Essays* (London, 1995), p. 188.

<sup>79</sup> F. M. Getz, 'The Method of Healing in Middle English', in F. Kudlien and R. J. Durling (eds.), *Galen's Method of Healing: Proceedings of the 1982 Galen Symposium* (Leiden, 1991), pp. 147-56.

<sup>80</sup> Assigning a readership to vernacular medical texts can be problematic for a number of reasons. First, many medical manuscripts contain materials in more than one language. In a survey of 178 medical and scientific manuscripts Voigts found 52 to be exclusively Latin, 40 exclusively Middle English, 75 both Latin and English, and 11 in a mixture of Latin, Middle English, and Anglo-Norman: L. E. Voigts, 'Scientific and Medical Books', in J. Griffiths and D. Pearsall (eds.), *Book Production and Publishing in Britain 1375-1475* (Cambridge, 1989), p. 380. It may be possible that some of the polyglot medical texts were written without a specific owner in mind, being composed simply of texts that the scribe had to hand. Robbins suggests that it is likely that collections of medical writings were composed in scriptoria for speculative sale: Robbins, 'Medical Manuscripts', p. 413. Therefore the presence of Latin texts within medical manuscripts may not always indicate an audience literate in Latin. Second, even the most learned of physicians owned manuscripts containing relatively simple medical information in Middle English. For example, the Provost of King's College Cambridge, John Argentine, owned Cambridge, MS Gonville and Caius College 84/166 in which Latin medical texts which formed the basis of the university medical curriculum sat side-by-side with unsophisticated calendrical, uroscopy, bloodletting, and remedy material in the vernacular: Voigts, 'Scientific and Medical Books', p. 383. See also F. M. Getz, 'Gilbertus Anglicus Anglicized', *Medical History* 26 (1982): 436-42.

<sup>81</sup> Voigts, 'Editing Middle English Texts', p. 42.

<sup>82</sup> Cited by Getz, 'Medical Practitioners', p. 256. A Middle English version of Henry Daniel's *Liber uricrisiarum* suggests an even wider audience, as it contains a dialogue between two men, one of whom asks the other to write down a few medicines to help the sick poor who cannot afford the services of a physician. Thus this text seems to be marketing itself as a self-help manual: Getz, 'Charity, Translation and the Language of Medical Learning', p. 11.

<sup>83</sup> This of itself might be seen as a particularly urban phenomenon, reflecting the expansion of a competitive medical marketplace, as has been suggested of the early-Modern period: H. J. Cook, *Decline of the Old Medical Regime*, p. 44.



possibility of challenge to the custodians of medical knowledge.<sup>84</sup> To a certain extent the translation into the vernacular of medical knowledge can be seen as an act of linguistic radicalism which allowed a greater degree of informed choice and hence competition to enter the medical market place.<sup>85</sup> More importantly, as vernacular medical texts represent learned medicine translated for popular consumption, it is reasonable to assume that concepts such as the four humours and bodily equilibrium were current in medieval society at large.

### Food in Medical Texts

If learned theories concerning issues such as the four humours and bodily equilibrium were, as I have suggested, circulating at levels of society below that of the university-educated physician, what was the role of food in those theories? In fact, food was absolutely central to those theories, as it was from food that the four humours were thought to be engendered:

mete is ifonge in þe place of seeþinge, þat is þe stomak, first, þe more sotil partie and fleting þerof þat phisicians clepiþ *pthisinaria* is idrawe be certeyne veynes of þe lyuour, and þer by þe worchinge of kinde hete it is ichaungid into þe foure humours.<sup>86</sup>

What one ate was thought to influence profoundly one's well-being; eating the wrong foods could produce illnesses which might even result in death.<sup>87</sup> Thus, food was used

---

<sup>84</sup> Archbishop Cranmer compared those who sought to hide theological truths from the laity by using unfamiliar language to physicians and alchemists who deliberately used 'strange languages' to 'hide their sciences from the knowledge of others': J. E. Cox (ed.), *Writings and Disputations of Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, Martyr, 1556, Relative to the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper*, Parker Society 17 (1884), pp. 310-11. Even today one need only consider how doctors (subconsciously) reveal their superior knowledge and fitness for their task by the use of incomprehensible language rooted in Latin and Greek; even the simple bruise is transformed into a complex and terrifying-sounding haematoma. The medical uses of language in the early modern period are discussed in R. Porter, 'The Language of Quackery in England, 1660-1800', in P. Burke and R. Porter (eds.), *The Social History of Language* (Cambridge, 1987), pp. 73-103.

<sup>85</sup> Parallels can be drawn with theology. When Wycliffe provided for the first time an English vocabulary in which issues such as transubstantiation could be discussed by the laity, ecclesiastical authority could be challenged more confidently by the laity: M. Lambert, *Medieval Heresy: Popular Movements from the Gregorian reform to the Reformation*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. (Oxford, 1992), p. 234. It has been suggested that the rise of lay literacy and the reading of theological texts in the vernacular led to the laity "shopping around" to find a confessor of appropriate wisdom and holiness: A. Murray, 'Counselling in Medieval Confession', in P. Biller and A. J. Minnis (eds.), *Handling Sin: Confession in the Middle Ages*, (Woodbridge, 1998), pp. 63-77.

<sup>86</sup> Trevisa, *On the Properties of Things*, 1: 148.

<sup>87</sup> For example, a physician advised his sons to avoid drinking milk and wine or eating milk and fish together as in combination they produced leprosy: L. Thorndike, 'Translation of a Letter from a Physician of Valencia to his Two Sons Studying at Toulouse 1315 A. D.', *Annals of Medical History*, NS 3 (1931): 17. This same advice is repeated in later texts, see, for example, W. Blades (ed.), *The Gouernayle of Helthe with the Medecyne of ye Stomacke. Reprinted from Caxton's Edition (Circa M.CCC.XCI)* (London, 1858), p. xx. I have numbered the pages of this text with Roman numerals from the opening page beginning, 'In this trefyse that is cleped Gouernayle of Helthe ...'. Certain theologians rejected the



throughout the medieval period to manipulate health.<sup>88</sup> This was possible because it was thought that foods had fixed values, and these values were recorded in texts such as Galen's *De alimentorum facultatibus*.<sup>89</sup> Foods were known to cause the production of specific humours on digestion and therefore could either be recommended or prohibited depending upon the temperament of the patient or the nature of the disease. For example, meat was thought to be the most nutritious of foods due to its temperate nature and ease of digestibility; its over-consumption could lead to an excess of humours which could be purged using laxatives or blood-letting.<sup>90</sup> This highly nutritious nature of meat caused further associations to be made regarding its consumption. For example, it was thought to cause a build up of humours which might lead to lechery. Hence, Thomas Aquinas concluded on the subject of fasting:

*illos cibos Ecclesia jejulantibus interdixit qui et in comedendo maximam habent delectationem, et iterum maxime hominem ad venerea provocant. Hujusmodi autem sunt carnes animalium in terra quiescentium et respirantium et quae ab eis procedunt, sicut lacticinae ex gressibilibus, et ova ex avibus. Quia enim hujusmodi magis conformantur humano corpori plus delectant et magis conferunt ad humani corporis nutrimentum; et sic ex eorum comestione plus superfluit, ut vertatur in materiam seminis cujus multiplicatio est maximum incitamentum luxuriae.*<sup>91</sup>

Monastics in particular needed to avoid a humoral imbalance which might lead to lecherous behaviour. Unsurprisingly, therefore, the Rule of Saint Benedict forbade the consumption of meat by monks unless they were sick and thus in need of extra

---

view that food was assimilated into the body via the humours. For a discussion of their views on food see P. L. Reynolds, *Food and the Body: Some Peculiar Questions in High Medieval Theology* (Leiden, 1999).

<sup>88</sup> Incorrect diet was considered to have a powerfully detrimental effect on the body, as can be demonstrated from the defence of the York leech, Matthew Rillesford, against the claim of incompetency in the treatment of the leg of a canon of the Prior of Gisburne. Rillesford claimed that the canon had consumed unwholesome food, which had been forbidden to him by Rillesford, and had thus hindered the working of the medicines prescribed: W. P. Baildon (ed.), *Notes on the Religious and Secular Houses of Yorkshire*, Yorkshire Archaeological Society Record Series 17 (1895), p. 78.

<sup>89</sup> Galen's writings on food are discussed in F. Fidanza, 'Diets and Dietary Recommendations in Ancient Greece and Rome and the School of Salerno', *Progress in Food and Nutrition Science* 3 (1979): 79-99; J. Wilkins, 'Eating À L'Ancienne: The Lesson of Galen', *Petits propos culinaires* 68 (2001): 18-28. Galen's works on food have been collected and are available in English translation in M. Grant (trans.), *Galen of Food and Diet* (London, 2000). A late-medieval text which worked on the same principles, but in a much simplified form, was the *Dyetary* of Andrew Boorde (1542): F. J. Furnivall (ed.), *Andrew Boorde's Introduction and Dyetary, with Barnes in the Defence of the Berde*, EETS, ES 10 (1870), pp. 225-303.

<sup>90</sup> See, for example, Villanova, *Regimen sanitatis ad regem Aragonum*, p. 227.

<sup>91</sup> 'The Church rations those foods which afford most pleasure and stimulate our sexual appetites. Such is the flesh of animals who browse on the earth and breath the air, and their products, such as milk from mammals and eggs from birds. These we find more congenial; they afford us more pleasure and greater nourishment. A greater surplus for seminal matter is produced from their consumption, and its abundance sets up a pressure of lust', Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, 43: 114-15.



nutrition.<sup>92</sup> Moreover, the Church can be seen as regulating the carnal passions of the laity at large by its injunctions to abstain from meat-eating on its designated fasts. That the food chosen to replace meat on fasting days was fish is also significant; as fish was thought to be phlegmatic in nature, it was thought to actively quench sexual desire.<sup>93</sup> Of course, the over-consumption of fish could also be seen as a hazard to health through the over-production of phlegm.<sup>94</sup> It was common therefore to cook the fish in a fashion which dried it out, or serve it with herbs or spices which might reduce its phlegmatic qualities, especially in the cold and wet season of winter.<sup>95</sup>

Throughout the Middle Ages, medical texts were written which dealt with the connections between health and diet at all stages in life. Even from before birth some consideration was given to nutrition. In the medieval period the foetus was thought to be nourished by menstrual blood in the womb.<sup>96</sup> Menstrual blood was seen as the primary force ‘of mannes generacioun and comyn foode to poore and riche and noble and symple in þe modir wombe’.<sup>97</sup> Following birth, the menstrual blood was thought to flow back to the breasts to be turned into milk to feed the baby.<sup>98</sup> There was some disagreement as to whether it was best for the baby to be fed by its own mother or by a

---

<sup>92</sup> ‘*Carnium vero quadrupedum omnimodo ab omnibus abstineatur comestio, praeter omnino debiles aegritudos*’: J. McCann (ed.), *The Rule of Saint Benedict: In Latin and English* (London, 1952), p. 96. The Carthusian order was so convinced of the dangers of eating meat that it forbade it even by sick monks. This was condemned as cruel and un-Christian, but a treatise was written in support of this injunction by Arnald of Villanova. A discussion and edition of this tract is to be found in D. M. Bazell, ‘Christian Diet: A Case Study Using Arnald of Villanova’s *De esu carniū*’ (Unpublished PhD Diss., Harvard University, 1991). By contrast, the Rule of the Templars did not exclude meat from the diet. It prescribed rather meat to be given to the Templar three times a week and that if a meat meal is missed for any reason then it should be given to the brother in plenty on the next day: J. M. Upton-Ward (ed.), *The Rule of the Templars: The French Text of the Rule of the Order of the Knights Templar* (Woodbridge, 1992), p. 26. Perhaps this is because they were a military order and a diet lacking in meat might be thought to reduce the humours necessary to lead an active life fighting for God.

<sup>93</sup> ‘Al maner of fysshe is colde of nature, and doth ingender fleume’: Furnivall (ed.), *Andrew Boorde’s Introduction and Dyetary*, p. 269.

<sup>94</sup> This point is made in the schoolbook of an Oxford schoolboy: ‘I have ete non other but salt fysh this lent, and it hath engendyrde so moch flewme within me that it stoppith my pypes that I can unneth speke nother brethe’: W. Nelson (ed.), *A Fifteenth Century School Book* (Oxford, 1956), p. 8.

<sup>95</sup> For example, the York Barber-Surgeons’ Guild Book recommends that in winter, as all kinds of fish were considered by medical experts to be ‘flemmatyke’, they should be ‘more vsed this tyme rostyð þene sodyne wythe waltire’, and that warming spices should be consumed such as ‘piper and musterd’ and especially fennel, which was thought to cause phlegm to ‘come oute of the body and out of thy stomak’: BL, MS Egerton 2572, fol. 55r.

<sup>96</sup> The child ‘is fedde and norisched in þe modir wombe with blode menstrual. Of so vile mater and vnstable man takeþ his norischnge and fedinge from þe bigynnynge’: Trevisa, *On the Properties of Things*, 1: 298; ‘þe childe in hir wombe is nourchid with that blode’: BL, MS Sloane 5, fol. 158r.

<sup>97</sup> Trevisa, *On the Properties of Things*, 1: 264.

<sup>98</sup> ‘Whenne þe childe is ibore kynde sendeþ þat blood to þe brestes and turneþ into melke to fede þe childe’: *ibid.*, 1: 303.



nurse, but the importance of the quality of the breast milk was undisputed.<sup>99</sup> What the nurse ate was considered to influence the quality of the milk and thus the health of the child, as the digestive system of the young child was seen as being particularly rapid and its temperament susceptible to influence from the quality of milk consumed.<sup>100</sup> In fact, this extended to the use of medicines; if the child were sick the medicines were to be given ‘to þe norisch and nouȝt to þe childe’.<sup>101</sup>

The baby’s entry into boyhood was marked by its change in diet, which occurred at the same time as the arrival of a moral consciousness: ‘þe childe is propirliche clepid *puer* when he is iwanied from melk and departid from þe brest and þe tete, and knoweth good and euel’.<sup>102</sup> At puberty they were thought to be ruled by hot humours, which engendered in the adolescent a tendency to be ‘vnstedefast and vnstable’.<sup>103</sup> As a result of their hot temperament they were prone to consume a ‘superfluyte of mete and drynke’ and thus fell easily into ‘diuers sikeness and eueles’.<sup>104</sup> In general, puberty seemed to be marked by a tendency to overeat, and it is with an almost resigned tone, recognisable to every mother of a teenage son, that Trevisa’s text declares, ‘Hi thinkip onlich in wombe ioye, and knowip nouȝt þe mesure of here owne wombe. Thei coueiten and desiren to ete and drynke alwey. Vnnethe þey risen out of here bed and axen mete anon’.<sup>105</sup>

As was suggested above concerning the feeding of the baby in the womb, women had their own specific medical relationship with food. Gynaecological texts often made reference to diet due to the fact that, according to medieval theories of physiology, being a woman entailed its own health risks, as a woman’s natural humoral constitution was thought to be different from that of a man. Women were thought to be

<sup>99</sup> See *ibid.*; and also A. Barratt (ed.), *The Knowing of Woman’s Kind in Childing: A Middle English Version of Material Derived from the Trotula and Other Sources* (Turnhout, 2001), pp. 73–75. ‘Of al þing it is nedip to be war of euel milk’ from which might arise ‘ful euel sores and wicked greues, as welkes, blaynes, and pymples in þe mouþ, spewing, feuers, crampes, squirte, þe flix, and opir such’: Trevisa, *On the Properties of Things*, 1: 299.

<sup>100</sup> ‘and ware euery norce that she ete no salte metis and bitter, for tho will rote the child or he come to any gret age’: Barratt (ed.), *The Knowing of Woman’s Kind*, p. 77. ‘For of good disposicioun of milke foode comep good disposicioun of þe childe, and aȝenward. For of corrupt melk of þe norsche breiden vnkyndeliche sore greues in þe childes litel body, and þat for tendirnes of þe childes kynde and also esi and sone chaunging of melke foode into humours, fleisch, and blood’: Trevisa, *On the Properties of Things*, 1: 299.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*, 1: 300.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*, 1: 300–1.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*, 1: 301.



much colder and moister in complexion than men.<sup>106</sup> To combat this moistness women menstruated ‘to make her bodies clene and hoole from syknesse’.<sup>107</sup> Women’s general health, and, perhaps more importantly, reproductive health, depended upon regular and moderate menstruation. As a result, treatments in gynaecological texts tended to concentrate on the irregularity or regularity of menstruation (alongside the positions or motions of the uterus).<sup>108</sup> Menstruation was considered to be intimately tied to consumption of food. As mentioned above, humours were thought to be produced via the process of digestion of food. In women this of itself was thought to be problematic because of their lack of natural heat which was necessary for the complete digestion of food:

at euery repaste of necessite a-bideth sum thyng on ther liuer vndefyed, the which growith to superfluites and drawe to-gedir in-to a vessel ordend for hem, of whch on ende is joyned to the lyuer and the neder end to the navill of þe woman, joyned to here matrice, so that the superfluites rotyn in that vessell & turne in-to corrupcion. But than nature, that hatith euery corrupcion, voidith at his power all thyng that noyeth the body of man or woman, and enforsith euery monyth onys to purge and clense the body of ille humoures and corrupcion [...] And the hotter that woman is, the lesse she shal haue of her floures.<sup>109</sup>

Thus, variations in diet were thought to affect menstruation and, therefore health. For example, menstruation might be prolonged in ‘þei þat ben of high complexion & beth norissed with hote metes & wit hote drynkes & leven in moche reste’.<sup>110</sup> Conversely, menstruation could be stopped by ‘moche fastyng’.<sup>111</sup> Moreover, problems in menstruation could cause dietary anomalies. For example, retention of menstrual blood could lead to ‘an vnskilfull appetyte to metes þat ben nought accordyng to hem as to eten coles or ryndes or shelles’.<sup>112</sup> Specific food might be prescribed to combat menstrual difficulties. Excessive bleeding might be treated by eating foods which

<sup>106</sup> ‘Women haue lesse hete in here bodies þan men haue and more moistnesse for defaute of hete þat shuld dryen her moistnesse & her humors’: B. Rowland (ed.), *Medieval Woman’s Guide to Health: The First English Gynecological Handbook* (Kent, Ohio, 1981), p. 58. This is an edition of BL, MS Sloane 2463, a gynaecological treatise dating from the early-fifteenth century which makes references to cures effected in London and by London physicians: *ibid.*, pp. 80 and 110. The medical manuscript owned by the London barber-surgeon, Richard Dod, contains a similar gynaecological treatise: BL, MS Sloane 5, fols. 158r-72v.

<sup>107</sup> Rowland (ed.) *Medieval Woman’s Guide to Health*, p. 58.

<sup>108</sup> J. Cadden, *Meanings of Sex Difference in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 1993), p. 19.

<sup>109</sup> Barratt (ed.), *The Knowing of Woman’s Kind*, pp. 53-55.

<sup>110</sup> Rowland (ed.), *Medieval Woman’s Guide to Health*, p. 58; BL, MS Sloane 5, fol. 158r.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 60.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 62.



caused the production of little blood, such as ‘fruyt and herbes’.<sup>113</sup> Likewise, foods might be prescribed which thickened the blood, such as ‘almaunde mylk & ryse made with almaunde mylke and furmentye [...] good moton and god hennes that be wel flesshyd and litel fatte’.<sup>114</sup> Inappropriate diet might be blamed for a number of gynaecological illnesses, as, for example, in the case of Lady Lisle (1537-38), who suffered from a phantom pregnancy. Her physician attributed her illness to the accumulation of ‘diverse cold and slemyshe humours’ brought on by incorrect eating practices. To counteract this he wrote to advise her not to eat ‘of cold meats, as powdered beef...or cold veal...gross meats, beef...all venison flesh, except...pheasants, nor of mutton, but seldom or little, for it engendereth slymysh humours’. Instead, she was advised to eat ‘of capon stewed, of the broth of the same, and also of capon’s flesh, and of hens, chickens, pedris [partridges], pigeons, woodcocks’.<sup>115</sup> Her physician was so convinced of the importance of food to Lady Lisle’s health that he concluded his letter: ‘Madame, if it pleaseth you to keep this diet, I trust that ye shal find yourself well and that your disease will go from you’.<sup>116</sup>

Throughout life an individual’s diet was thought to affect his or her physical temperament and health, and texts were written in order to instruct the individual on the foods which should be consumed and avoided.<sup>117</sup> The degree of technicality and the methods of organising material varied greatly from text to text. One method of organisation was the ‘head to foot’ approach, such as was employed by Gilbertus Anglicus’ *Compendium medicinae*.<sup>118</sup> This text consists, for the most part, of medicinal recipes grouped according to the disease for which they were useful, starting with diseases of the brain (to which the largest section of the text is devoted) and descending via the eyes, lungs, heart, liver, etc. Although apparently aimed primarily at the medical

---

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 76.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 78-80.

<sup>115</sup> M. S. C. Byrne (ed.), *The Lisle Letters* (London, 1981), vol. 4: 169-71.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 171.

<sup>117</sup> This concern with diet and health extended right to the end of life, with regimens of health detailing the control of the Non-Naturals, such as the *Gerontocomia*, being written for those in old age: Gabriele Zerbi, *Gerontocomia: On the Care of the Aged*, ed. and trans. L. R. Lind, *Memorials of the American Philosophical Society* 182 (Philadelphia, 1988).

<sup>118</sup> It survives in Middle English translation in several manuscripts, the earliest dating from the first-half of the fifteenth century. It has been edited in F. M. Getz (ed.), *Healing and Society in Medieval England: A Middle English Translation of the Pharmaceutical Writings of Gilbertus Anglicus* (Wisconsin, 1991). This version of the text lacks sections on the diseases of women and children, travel, and the use of animals and animal parts in medicines, which leads Getz to conclude that this particular manuscript probably belonged to a monastic house: *ibid.*, p. xvi. A copy of the *Compendium* is in BL, MS Sloane 5, fols. 61r-157r, owned by Richard Dod.



practitioner, the text does not assume any great level of prior knowledge. It gives instructions for making the fundamental compounds which form the basis of other more complex remedies, defines medical terms which might not be familiar, and also gives helpful practical advice.<sup>119</sup> Although it gives some consideration to matters such as anatomy and physiology, unlike its Latin original, it is little concerned with theory, concentrating rather on disease and treatment.<sup>120</sup> Thus, whether intended for the professional medical practitioner or the amateur, its aim is practical treatment.

The basic layout of the text is, for each disease, to give the cause, symptoms, and one or more recipes for its cure. In fact, in most instances the text is more complex, as, for example, in the case of mania. Mania is described as a 'sikenes of þe myddil party of þe brayn and comeþ of a postem [abscess] in þat parti', and is further defined as sometimes resulting from 'blood', sometimes 'coler', sometimes 'malencoly', but never 'flevme'.<sup>121</sup> It then goes on to describe the symptoms according to the humoral cause. Following this lengthy description of the various symptoms, it gives remedies for the disease. For example, a man suffering from mania resulting from 'malencoly' should 'leve malencolious metes' and consume rather 'metis þat ben moiste, as fische, and ripe fruytis, and borage'.<sup>122</sup> Recipes are also given for 'pillules' made of herbs, wine, and wheat flour. It is also recommended that the patient is comforted 'with myrþe to do awei his heuynes'.<sup>123</sup> Following this it recommends that he is 'cuppide in þe two nepir sidis of þe hede a litil aboue þe necke, eipir bitwene þe two shuldir-bladis', he should be given a 'clistre' of 'mynte and rwe', he should be bathed but 'dwelle þerin a litil while', be given a 'special medicyn' of 'lapis armenicus', and if all else fails 'to slitte þe skyn and open þe skulle'.<sup>124</sup>

If one considers the treatment of mania in the *Compendium medicinae* a hierarchy of treatment can be observed. At the most fundamental level is the avoidance of foods that exacerbate the condition and consumption of foods that stimulate humours contrary to the ones causing the disease; next herbal medications are prescribed; then

<sup>119</sup> See the text's information on 'oxymel', *ibid.*, p. 3; 'dissolutiues', *ibid.*, p. 36; and suppositories, *ibid.*, p. 19.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*, p. xxxii.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 14.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 15.

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 16. 'Cupping' was a form of bloodletting in which a heated vessel was placed upon the skin which had been scored with a knife, thus a stimulating, through the creation of a vacuum, a relatively gentle flow of blood; a clyster was a form of enema: Rawcliffe, *Medicine and Society*, pp. 68 and 61. *Lapis armenicus* is probably copper sulphate: Getz (ed.), *Healing and Society*, p. 314.



more powerful chemical remedies are suggested. Alongside these remedies is the suggestion of other changes to be made to aspects of life-style. The cupping and the ‘clistre’ are prescribed to assist the body’s natural processes of evacuation. Surgical treatment is clearly intended only as a final resort if all other therapeutics fail. As such, therefore, the text echoes the ethos of the ancient Greek physicians, in which the first line of treatment was via food and exercise, then drugs, and finally surgery.<sup>125</sup> In this ordering of treatment, however, there is also the suggestion that there are degrees of “potency” in food. Foods, such as meats, have the power to influence humoral balance by their consumption; herbs and spices have a greater potency of action; and those things, such as chemical compounds, which would not normally be consumed as foods, are drugs proper.<sup>126</sup> Certainly, this observation regarding herbs and spices being more potent forms of food was suggested by Magninus Mediolanensis, a fourteenth-century physician, who wrote a book on sauces, the *Opusculum de saporibus*. In this text he noted the danger posed to the consumer of sauces made of herbs and spices because of the fact that they approached the nature of medicines, and thus should not be taken while in good health.<sup>127</sup>

To a certain extent, I think this hierarchical structuring of food values can be linked to the “democratisation” of the *regimen sanitatis*. As mentioned above, *regimina sanitatis* were originally written for wealthy, usually noble, individuals. The urban bourgeoisie, however, represented a growing market for health care in the city. As a result, the *regimen sanitatis* had a new audience, and *regimina* written for specific individuals, such as that for Jaume II, were copied and circulated to a much wider audience.<sup>128</sup> Yet these texts were still not really suited to their new audience; they were

<sup>125</sup> Lonie, ‘A Structural Pattern in Greek Dietetics’, p. 239.

<sup>126</sup> The properties of individual herbs and spices are recorded in Trevisa, *On the Properties of Things*, 2: 882-1091. Another category of materials, which seems to fall between herbs and spices and chemicals, is precious metals and stones. The *Compendium* contains several recipes containing such materials. For example, the remedy for ‘cardiacle’ includes pearls, gold, and jacinth: Getz (ed.), *Healing and Society*, p. 148. Lapidaries, texts specifically concerned with the properties of precious stones, were popular in both verse and prose forms in the Middle Ages. Several are edited in J. Evans and M. S. Serjeantson (eds.), *English Medieval Lapidaries*, EETS, OS 190 (1933).

<sup>127</sup> L. Thorndike, ‘A Medieval Sauce-Book’, *Speculum* 9 (1934): 186.

<sup>128</sup> This phenomenon has been considered in relation to the Crown of Aragon: L. García-Ballester, ‘Changes in the *Regimina sanitatis*: The Role of Jewish Physicians’, in S. Campbell *et al.* (eds.), *Health, Disease and Healing in Medieval Culture* (London, 1992), pp. 119-31. Another example of a *regimen sanitatis* written for a specific noble individual is that written by the physician Gilbert Kymer for Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester (1424), which can be found in BL, MS Sloane 4, fols. 63-104. The work is divided into twenty-six chapters, the majority of which deal with matters concerning food and drink. This unique copy is written in a sixteenth-century hand and is found alongside several recipes for ink, perfumes, etc. in a low-status manuscript. Thus this particular specifically prescribed *regimen* clearly found a readership outside its intended primary recipient.



viable only for the very rich who had both the time and money to adopt the lifestyle changes recommended by the texts. They were also very slow in action. It can be imagined that in the busy urban environment there was a demand for medical treatments which could be seen to work quickly.<sup>129</sup> As such, therefore, herbs and spices would have been seen as more swift in action. For example, the burning sensation experienced on swallowing pepper might have been perceived as the spice taking immediate effect on the body. Thus, the use of herbs and spices in medicinal remedies might be seen as a move towards a more “modern” concept of medicine in which the focus is not so much upon the individual as on the medication. A more efficient way of treating the growing number of urban citizens would have been to use materials which were known to have a rapid and predictable effect, for example, to prescribe a specific herb which would always have a laxative effect regardless of the individual temperament of the patient. Perhaps the urban environment of the Middle Ages provided the climate in which the modern “one-drug-suits-all” approach could develop. The increased emphasis on a hierarchy of potency in foods may be connected to a reduced focus on individuality.

It is a mistake, however, to take this idea of the “democratisation” of medicine too far, as to a certain extent the use of ingredients in medicinal recipes can be seen as underwriting a fixed social order. Various medical texts suggest that certain recipes are more suited to the rich and others to the poor. For example, the *Compendium medicinae* has two recipes for ‘distempering of þe lyuer’. Only the one for the rich contains ‘diamargariton’, an electuary (medicinal paste) based on pearls.<sup>130</sup> Likewise, a fifteenth-century gynaecological treatise notes different recipes for rich and poor.<sup>131</sup> A medieval plague treatise is even more precise: ‘And of spyces comunly ys gynger, cinamoum, comin, masses, sapharon, and thys ys good for riche people. And for power peple, take rew, sauge, wallenutess, persely, & mengeld with vinegre toggiders, and thys is goude sawse. And yf they be betwyx bothe, nother poer nor riche, take comin & sapharon & mengel togiders with vinegre’.<sup>132</sup> The urban demand for a range of effective and generally applicable therapies, whilst paying less attention to the lifestyle of the individual, did not all together turn aside from considerations of social position.

---

<sup>129</sup> This would also have been of benefit to the physician who could have more patients and, therefore, income.

<sup>130</sup> Getz (ed.), *Healing and Society*, p. 219.

<sup>131</sup> Rowland, *Medieval Woman's Guide to Health*, pp. 114, 136.

<sup>132</sup> Pickett, ‘The “Canutus” Plague Treatise’, p. 277.



A further result of the growing urban demand for medical advice concerning diet was the production of a bastardised form of the *regimen sanitatis*, the dietary. Dietaries sought to give general information to the reader regarding the control of the Non-Naturals; they made no attempt to direct themselves towards a specific temperament or lifestyle, unlike the *regimen sanitatis*. One such text which, like the *Compendium medicinae*, organises its material by taking a head to foot approach is *Queen Isabel's Dietary*, which was supposedly originally written for Queen Isabel of England, but later found a wider circulation in a much simplified form.<sup>133</sup> This short text deals in turn with the health of the brain, the eyes, the breast, the heart, and the stomach. For each of these parts of the body there are two paragraphs: the first deals with what is good for the part in question, the second what is bad for it. The advice given in each paragraph deals with different aspects of lifestyle. For example, the paragraph dealing with what is good for the brain suggests which substances should be smelt, that wine should be drunk in moderation, which herbs should be ingested, that the hair should be combed, that sleep should be taken in moderation, and that pleasing sounds should be listened to.<sup>134</sup> Dietaries might also order their information for easy reference by time, either by the months or seasons. Dietary advice in such texts was primarily concerned with the maintenance of health rather than treatment, and was frequently accompanied by information regarding bloodletting.<sup>135</sup> One such text, which is extant in several manuscripts, is a monthly prescription of diet and bloodletting, composed probably early in the fifteenth century.<sup>136</sup> The dietary advice included in this treatise is extremely rudimentary and does not approach anything that might properly be termed a *regimen*. For example, the advice given for the month of June regarding diet is merely, 'gode it is to drynke a dyscheiful of colde water euerye day, fastyng, and drynke ale and mede in mesure, and ete sawge and letuse'. In addition, advice regarding food often seems to coincide with what would normally be consumed at that time of year. For example, for the month of September it recommends 'all manere of frute that is rype'.<sup>137</sup> As much

---

<sup>133</sup> An edition of this text, transcribed from the late fourteenth-century version found in BL, MS Sloane 100, fols. 27-29, is available in W. L. Braekman, *Studies on Alchemy, Diet, Medecine [sic] and Prognostication in Middle English*, Scripta: Medieval and Renaissance Texts 22 (1986), 67-76.

<sup>134</sup> Braekman, *Studies on Alchemy*, 67.

<sup>135</sup> Such a connection was entirely logical within the framework of the Non-Naturals, as both were concerned with issues of retention and evacuation.

<sup>136</sup> Two versions are transcribed in L. R. Mooney, 'Diet and Bloodletting: A Monthly Regimen', in L. M. Matheson (ed.), *Popular and Practical Science of Medieval England* (East Lansing: Colleagues Press, 1994), 245-61.

<sup>137</sup> Mooney, 'Diet and Bloodletting', 252.



fruit would be harvested at that time it would probably have been part of general diet anyway. Likewise, in March it recommends ‘fyges and reysyns and othere swete mettes and drynkes’.<sup>138</sup> As this time of year falls in the period of Lent, when all meat products were excluded from the diet, and it was not unusual to liven up the monotonous diet of fish with figs and raisins.<sup>139</sup>

Other dietary texts were more freely organised. One reasonably lengthy example is *The Gouernayle of Helthe*.<sup>140</sup> This text, often found alongside Lydgate’s ‘Dietary’, is extant primarily in pocket-size forms and found either alone or bound with other medical texts, suggesting that it probably functioned as a portable, practical medical text for the medical practitioner. The stated aim of the text is to provide information to those who would ‘haue longe lyff’, which it achieves through advising the reader on a number of lifestyle issues.<sup>141</sup> Much attention is paid to diet, but its ethos supports those who would ‘etyn for they wolde lyue’, rather than those ‘that goon be fleshlynes wolden lyue for to ete’.<sup>142</sup> Before dealing with food, the text discusses what to do on rising in the morning, such as stretching and combing one’s hair in order to draw out the vapours arising from the stomach.<sup>143</sup> It then considers exercise, which is only considered beneficial if it consists of ‘wylful meuyng’.<sup>144</sup> The activities undertaken during everyday toil (presumably such as were engaged in by the lower classes who lived by manual labour) are not considered ‘proper’ exercise; health-giving exercise is seen as the conjunction of deliberate action of both mind and body.

The next section concerns what foods a man should eat. Most of the advice deals with the concept of moderation. Thus, the ‘houre of etyng be when thou art kyndly hungry’; the food consumed ‘sholde not be passing in any qualite’; and in quantity ‘thy mete ne thy drynke sholde be no more but as thi kyndely helthe myght ouercom it’.<sup>145</sup>

<sup>138</sup> Mooney, ‘Diet and Bloodletting’, 251.

<sup>139</sup> See, for example, the accounts of the clerical household of Munden’s Chantry, in which there is a rise in the purchase of almonds, raisins, figs, and also spices immediately prior to and during the Lenten period: K. L. Wood-Legh (ed.), *A Small Household of the XVth Century: The Account Book of Munden’s Chantry Bridport* (Manchester, 1956), *passim*.

<sup>140</sup> This prose text, probably dating from the second half of the fourteenth century, is extant in both Latin and Middle English in several manuscripts, as well as in two early printed editions produced by William Caxton and Wynkyn de Worde. A facsimile version of the Caxton edition is available in W. Blades (ed.), *The Gouernayle of Helthe with the Medecyne of ye Stomacke. Reprinted from Caxton’s Edition (Circa M.CCC.XCI)* (London, 1858).

<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.*, i.

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.*, xxv.

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.*, vii.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.*, viii.

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.*, xvi, xvii, xx.



The text lists foods which should be avoided because of their extreme qualities, such as the heat produced by ‘peper, garlek, oynyons, cresses, sauge, myntes, persile, & suche other’; it gives examples of foods which are temperate and thus good to be consumed, such as ‘lambe of on yere, yonge kyddes, souking calues’; and also gives suggestions of treatment by contraries for foods which have some excessive quality, as, for example, with ‘salte metes, soure & bytter’ which ‘may be ameded wyth swete appuls’.<sup>146</sup> Quite unusually, the text stresses the importance of the role of appetite in good health, suggesting that even if medically a capon is preferable to mutton, ‘yf a man desyre more moton than a capon, the moton shall rather be eten’, although it does note that if there is ‘moche distaunce in qualyte of metes, we mowen not doo thus’.<sup>147</sup> Also, in a manner distinctly reminiscent of modern food-combining diets, the text suggests ‘that at one mele men sholden not ete dyuerse metes, & therefore at morow ete but bred alone, and at eueyn flesh alone’ due to the different types of humours each produce.<sup>148</sup> The text concludes by refuting those who reject the advice of doctors and other wise men and chose ‘euyl gouernance in metes & drynkes’, suggesting that eventually they shall reap their rewards for their ‘vertues wasten preuli, and so euery day they ordeyne hem to lepre or to sodeyn deth’.<sup>149</sup>

Ideas concerning the importance of the correct diet in the maintenance of health and the dangers of thoughtless consumption were clearly widely prevalent in medieval urban society. I have considered here only medical texts, but such ideas also found their way into more general texts. Conduct literature sometimes contained advice upon the health benefits and hazards of certain foods. For example, the *Boke of Nurture* gives various information on the effects of foods on the bodily system, such as: ‘beware of saladis, grene metis, & of frutis rawe for þey make many a man haue a feble mawe’.<sup>150</sup> There also seems to have been some intrusion of medical ideas into cookery practice.<sup>151</sup> For example, the cookery book allegedly compiled for Richard II claims to have been

---

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid.*, xvi-xix.

<sup>147</sup> *Ibid.*, xxi. This almost exactly the opposite view to that taken by the Church on the appetite. The Church saw obeying the appetite as an act of gluttony. See Chapter 3.

<sup>148</sup> *Ibid.*, xxi-xxii.

<sup>149</sup> *Ibid.*, xxxi-xxxii.

<sup>150</sup> John Russell, *Boke of Nurture*, in F. J. Furnivall (ed.), *The Babees Book*, EETS, OS 32 (1868; repr. 1969), p. 124.

<sup>151</sup> As mentioned above, the physician Magninus Mediolanensis wrote a book on sauces, which might prove as useful to the cook as the doctor. This text is discussed in detail by T. Scully, ‘The *Opusculum de saporibus* of Magninus Mediolanensis’, *Medium ævum* 54 (1985): 178-207.



‘compiled by assent and auysement’ of masters of ‘phisik and of philosophie’.<sup>152</sup>

Andrew Boorde’s *Dyetary* goes so far as to claim that ‘a good coke is halfe a physician’, suggesting that the cook and the physician ‘muste consult togyther for the preparaci<sup>on</sup> of meate for sycke men’, for without the cook’s advice the physician ‘wyl make a werysse dysshe of meate, the whiche the sycke man can not take’.<sup>153</sup> Similarly, in the household ordinances of Edward IV (c. 1471) the cook and the physician are shown to have a collaborative role, as the king’s physician is to talk with the king’s ‘steward, chambrelayn, assewer, and the master cooke to deuyse by counsayle what metes or drinkes is best according with the kinges dyet’.<sup>154</sup> It has even been suggested that the menus for medieval feasts were constructed with the idea of humoral balance in mind.<sup>155</sup>

Even in popular literature an awareness of the effect of food upon health is evident. For example, in ‘The Nun’s Priest’s Tale’, Pertelote plays the physician. She diagnoses Chauntecleer’s dreams as the product of humoral imbalance resulting from ‘greet superfluytee’ of ‘red colera’ and recommends for its cure ‘digestyves’ of ‘wormes’ and ‘laxatyves’ compounded of various herbs.<sup>156</sup> More striking, however, is the description of the ‘povre wydwe’, whose health is attributed to her ‘Attempree diete’ lacking in sauces, wines, and rich meats.<sup>157</sup> Chaucer tells us in great detail of the simplicity of her diet and the unpleasant medical conditions she avoids as a consequence. This, I think, must be seen as an example of Chaucer’s humour. The poor widow does not eat her healthy diet as a result of a concern over health issues, but because ‘Hir diet was accordant to hir cote’.<sup>158</sup> The poor widow could not afford to eat in any other way. By placing the subsequent learned discussion of medical theories within the farm-yard and in the mouths of birds, Chaucer clearly gestures to the

<sup>152</sup> C. B. Hieatt and S. Butler, *Curye on Inglysch: English Culinary Manuscripts of the Fourteenth Century (Including the Forme of Cury)*, EETS, SS 8 (1985), p. 20.

<sup>153</sup> Furnivall (ed.), *Andrew Boorde’s Introduction and Dyetary*, pp. 277-78. Furnivall glosses ‘werysse’ as ‘tastless’, but it probably means something more like ‘most unpleasant’. See ‘werse’ (adj.) in R. E. Lewis (ed.), *Middle English Dictionary*, vol. 13 (Ann Arbor, 2000).

<sup>154</sup> A. R. Myers (ed.), *The Household of Edward IV: The Black Book and the Ordinances of 1478* (Manchester, 1959), p. 123. For a study of the inter-relation of medieval cookery and medicine in the Netherlands see R. Jansen-Sieben, ‘From Food Therapy to Cookery-Book’, in E. Kooper (ed.), *Medieval Dutch Literature in its European Context* (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 261-79. For a study of the types of foods found in recipes for the sick see T. Scully, ‘The Sickdish in Early French Recipe Collections’, in S. Campbell *et al.* (eds.), *Health, Disease and Healing in Medieval Culture* (London, 1992), pp. 132-40.

<sup>155</sup> K. M. Burkholder, ‘“Attempree Diete Was Al Hir Phisik”: The Medieval Application of Medical theory to Feasting’, *Essays in Medieval Studies* 13 (1996): 15-29.

<sup>156</sup> Chaucer, *Riverside Chaucer*, pp. 254-55, ll. 2927-28, 2961-2.

<sup>157</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 253, ll. 2821, 2838.

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 253, l. 2836.



ludicrous nature of such discussions. The farm-yard of the poor widow is precisely the location in which such learned discourse has no place. Through the juxtaposition of the luxury of theoretical speculation with the locus of potential malnutrition, Chaucer indicates the limitations of medical theory and practice. One needs to have sufficient money not only to have a choice over the constitution of one's diet, but also to be able to afford the advice of a physician to put matters right. Is Chaucer being unfair to medical practitioners though? Is there evidence to show that the dietary needs of the poor, sick, and vulnerable were taken into account?

### Medieval Hospitals

One place to look for those most in need of health-giving diets is the medieval hospital. One has to be careful when thinking about medieval hospitals; they were vastly different institutions from their modern equivalents. The origin of the medieval hospital was as a wayside shelter for all comers, the term being derived from '*hospes*' meaning 'host' or 'guest'.<sup>159</sup> As the Benedictine Rule insisted that all guests should be received '*tamquam Christus*', showing hospitality to strangers was regarded as fundamental to the religious life, resulting in many hospitals being founded by religious houses.<sup>160</sup> Hospitals soon became associated, however, with the broader role of ministering to the poor and the sick.<sup>161</sup> Robert Copland's satirical poem 'The Highway to the Spital-House' (1536) describes hospitals as offering relief to those who are unable to work and have no other means of support, such as 'old people, sick and impotent', 'Poor women in childbed', 'Weak men sore wounded by great violence/ And sore men eaten with pox and pestilence/ And honest folk fallen in great poverty'.<sup>162</sup> Hospitals were also founded to cater for specific illnesses, such as leprosy, and some came to specialise in the treatment of specific patients, such as St Mary of Bethlehem, London, which by the end of the fourteenth century was primarily a lunatic asylum.<sup>163</sup>

<sup>159</sup> R. M. Clay, *The Medieval Hospitals of England* (London, 1909), p. 1.

<sup>160</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3; McCann (ed.), *The Rule of Saint Benedict*, p. 118. The Rule most commonly adhered to by medieval hospitals was that of the Augustinian order as it stressed the importance of serving others and its spiritual duties were lighter than most other orders, allowing time to be spent on the care of the poor and sick.

<sup>161</sup> The book recording the foundation of St Bartholomew's Hospital, Smithfield, records numerous examples of sick pilgrims seeking miraculous cures for their ailments at the hospital: N. Moore(ed.), *The Book of the Foundation of St Bartholomew's Church in London*, EETS, OS 163 (1923).

<sup>162</sup> Robert Copland, 'The Highway to the Spital-House', in A. V. Judges (ed.), *The Elizabethan Underworld: A Collection of Tudor and Early Stuart Tracts and Ballads Telling of the Lives and Misdoings of Vagabonds, Thieves, Rogues and Cozeners, and Giving Some Account of the Operation of the Criminal Law* (London, 1930), p. 5.

<sup>163</sup> E. G. O'Donoghue, *The Story of Bethlehem Hospital from Its Foundation in 1247* (London, 1914), p. 69.



Therefore, although the medieval hospital was far removed from our modern concept of the hospital, and it is usual to think of medieval hospitals as entirely distinct from their modern equivalents, an element of its perceived role was, nevertheless, to promote the health of its dependants.<sup>164</sup> To what extent, then, can medieval hospitals be seen as providing their inmates with food designed to promote health according to medieval medical theories? Writing on Lanfranc's hospital foundation in Canterbury in the second half of the twelfth century, the monk Eadmer commented on the provision of necessary food for the sick and infirm.<sup>165</sup> When Thomas More wrote his *Utopia* a few centuries later the sick of the Utopian hospitals were to receive '*cibos ex medicorum praescripto*'.<sup>166</sup> Thus, throughout the Middle Ages there was a recognition of the importance of the correct types of food to be administered to hospital inhabitants. Moreover, evidence exists for the involvement of those with medical knowledge in certain medieval hospitals.<sup>167</sup>

To what extent, however, were medieval dietary theories adhered to in practice? It is not easy to discover precisely which foods were consumed by the sick poor as

---

<sup>164</sup> Excavations at St Mary's London discovered two glass urinals, suggesting the practice of medical diagnosis: C. Thomas *et al* (eds.), *Excavations at the Priory and Hospital of St Mary Spital, London* (London, 1997), p.111. The will of the London mercer, John Don (1479) sets aside £25 for the services of a surgeon for five years 'in his daily besynes and comfort of the poure, sore and seke peple lakkyng helpe and money to pay for their lechecraft in London and the subarbes of the same. In especiall in the hospitalles of Seint Mary, Saint Bartholomewe, Saint Thomas Newgate, Ludgate and in other places'. Cited in C. Rawcliffe, 'The Hospitals of Later Medieval London', *Medical History* 28 (1984): 8. St Leonard's Hospital York owed 3s. to Adam, the apothecary, in 1287: P. H. Cullum, 'Hospitals and Charitable Provision in Medieval Yorkshire, 936-1547' (Unpublished PhD Diss, York University, 1989), p. 167. Indeed, the 1364 visitation of St Leonard's shows a definite concern with the cure of the body as it is stated that those in the hospital's care were not to be discharged until convalesced and able to work: '*infirmi introducti non expellantur donec restituti fuerint sanitati set cum convalidint et sunt potentes ad laborandum*': M. A. Seymour, 'The Organisation, Personnel and Functions of the Medieval Hospital in the Later Middle Ages' (Unpublished MA Diss., University of London, 1947), Appendix I, p. 334.

<sup>165</sup> M. Rule (ed.), *Eadmeri historia novorum in Anglia et opuscula duo de vita Sancti Anselmi et quibusdam miraculis ejus* (London, 1884), p. 15.

<sup>166</sup> 'food prescribed by the physicians': E. Surtz and J. H. Hexter (eds.), *The Complete Works of St Thomas More. Volume 4. Utopia* (London, 1965), pp. 140-41.

<sup>167</sup> Several medieval hospitals had physicians or surgeons as masters, although they may not have exercised their professional skills on their patients: M. Carlin, 'Medieval English Hospitals', in L. Granshaw and R. Porter (eds.), *The Hospital in History* (London, 1989), pp. 29-31. In the later fourteenth century, St Bartholomew's, Smithfield, is thought to have enjoyed the services of John Mirfield as physician and chaplain. Between 1380 and 1395 he wrote his medical encyclopaedia, the *Breviarum Bartolomei*, which gives information on the correct sorts of food to be given for different medical conditions. For example, for the condition of consumption he recommends milk, wine, barley water, river crabs, figs, grapes, and sugar of roses: P. H. S. Hartley and H. Aldridge, *Johannes de Mirfield of St Bartholomew's, Smithfield: His Life and Works* (Cambridge, 1936), pp. 24, 38, 80-88. Faye Getz, however, suggests that there is no evidence to show that the *Breviarium* was ever used at St Bartholomew's: F. Getz, 'John Mirfield and the *Breviarium Bartolomei*: The Medical Writings of a Clerk at St Bartholomew's Hospital in the Later Fourteenth Century', *Society for the Social History of Medicine Bulletin* 37 (1985): 26.



hospital accounts rarely differentiate between consumables purchased for inmates and staff. For example, although not specifically stated in the accounts of God's House, Southampton, it is unlikely that the periodic purchases of fresh fish, fresh meat, wine, and pomegranates were enjoyed by the hospital inmates, but rather by the warden and his relatives as such purchases coincided with their residence.<sup>168</sup> Certainly, excavations at the cemetery of St Mary's, London, suggest a difference in diet between social groups accommodated within the house.<sup>169</sup> The diets of inmates with corrodies are sometimes recorded. For example, John de Cundall and his wife had a corrody confirmed within St Leonard's, York, in 1398 consisting of 14 white loaves of the better sort, 6 miche loaves, 8 gallons of good ale, and 6 gallons of common ale weekly and 12*d.* for victuals from the kitchen, and every year a bushel of salt and a bushel of oaten flour.<sup>170</sup> As corrodians were pensioners rather than sick inmates, however, this information is of little use in indicating what food was provided for those in ill health.<sup>171</sup> The 1364 visitation of St Leonard's, York, states that the infirm inhabitants should be provided with bread, ale, and a dish of food, but gives no more details regarding the food of which the dish should be composed, although it goes on to say that those too sick to consume the usual livery were to be fed from the money given for the pittance of the poor, suggesting perhaps special food suitable for the sick.<sup>172</sup> The account book of St Leonard's for 1461-62 records the purchase for the poor men and women of the infirmary of rye bread, meat, butter, cheese, milk, eggs, and herrings, with no meat purchased during Lent.<sup>173</sup> Although the types of meat are not specified here, the 1399 visitation lists in the hospital's store pork, piglet, beef, boar, and mutton.<sup>174</sup>

These purchases do not suggest food purchased specifically to benefit the health of the inmates, rather they replicate the typical staple diet of the age. One might expect

<sup>168</sup> E. Prescott, *The English Medieval Hospital c. 1050-1640* (London, 1992), p. 29.

<sup>169</sup> Thomas *et al* (ed.), *Excavations at St Mary Spital*, p. 112.

<sup>170</sup> *Calendar of the Patent Rolls Preserved in the Public Record Office ... Richard II. Volume VI. AD 1396-1399* (1909; repr. Nendeln, 1971), p. 384. A 'miche' loaf is a loaf of white bread: S. M. Kuhn (ed.), *Middle English Dictionary*, vol. 6 (Ann Arbor, 1959). A very useful study of the food consumed in medieval Yorkshire hospitals is in Cullum, 'Hospitals and Charitable Provision', pp. 169-95.

<sup>171</sup> St Leonard's was also responsible for feeding the poor at the gate, prisoners, and the inhabitants of York's leper houses. In 1293, the hospital was distributing at the gate each week 247 wheaten loaves, 14 miche loaves, 247 herring, 33 dishes of meat, and 13 gallons of ale. It sent to the leper houses each week 5 gallons of ale and 8 meat dishes, and to the prison half a loaf to each prisoner on Sunday: Cullum, 'Hospitals and Charitable Provision', pp. 192-93.

<sup>172</sup> Seymour, 'The Organisation, Personnel and Functions of the Medieval Hospital', Appendix I, p. 335.

<sup>173</sup> YMA, M2 6d. fols. 36v-38r.

<sup>174</sup> Seymour, 'The Organisation, Personnel and Functions of the Medieval Hospital', Appendix III, pp. 361-62.



the purchase of quantities of poultry and almonds, which were considered particularly suitable for consumption by the infirm. if specific attention were being paid to the dietary requirements of the sick inmates.<sup>175</sup> Perhaps the only indication of attention being paid to medical theories of diet is the purchase of large quantities of cumin and pepper for the infirmary.<sup>176</sup> These spices had various medicinal uses. Trevisa's Middle English translation of *De proprietatibus rerum* states that pepper 'purgeth and clensith þe brayn of flematik superfluyte, and freteþ deed fleissh, and consumeth and wastep þe webbe in þe ye, and clenseþ þe spirituelle membres of superfluytees þat bep colde and gleymy', and that cumin 'hap vertu to tempere and to departe and to dele, and to abate pikkenes of fumosite, and to comforte dygestioun, and to abate ventosite and ache of þe stomak, and to doon away swellynge, and to staunche þe flux of þe wombe'.<sup>177</sup> These spices were, however, relatively cheap and simple compared, for example, with those used in 1347 to treat the monks in the infirmary of Norwich Cathedral Priory, which included sugar, almonds, cloves, mace, nutmegs, saffron, aniseed, ginger, liquorice, senna, figs, dates, grains of paradise, and fennel.<sup>178</sup>

The reasoning behind this apparent lack of concern regarding the cure of the bodies of the hospital inmates is probably largely due to the medieval perception of hospitals as places for the cure of the soul. In the medieval city the prosperous and the destitute intermingled closely, which ensured the visibility of poverty and hardship by those most financially able to help.<sup>179</sup> To a large extent the hospital can be seen as a product of this intermingling.<sup>180</sup> Bronislaw Geremek suggests that in the Middle Ages poverty as result of an inability to work through infirmity, old age, or ill health was seen as an ethical rather than a social problem. Although charity may have been motivated by

<sup>175</sup> T. Scully, 'The Sickdish in Early French Recipe Collections', pp. 132-40.

<sup>176</sup> E.g. YMA, M2/6c, fols. 10v and 26r. Both of these spices appear regularly as rents owed to St Bartholomew's, London: N. J. Kerling (ed.), *Cartulary of St Bartholomew's Hospital, Founded 1123: A Calendar* (London, 1973), *passim*.

<sup>177</sup> Trevisa, *On the Properties of Things*, 2: 1024-25, 933-34. A copy of *De proprietatibus rerum* was left to St Leonard's by Robert Ragenhill in 1430: YMA, Probate Register 1. fols. 232v-233r.

<sup>178</sup> H. W. Saunders (ed.), *An Introduction to the Obedientiary and Manor Rolls of Norwich Cathedral Priory* (Norwich, 1930), pp. 132-33. For an example of the range of spices carried by apothecaries see G. E. Trease and J. H. Hodson, 'The Inventory of John Hexham, A Fifteenth-Century Apothecary', *Medical History* 9 (1965): 76-81. For the prices of spices at this time see J. E. Thorold Rogers, *A History of Agriculture and Prices in England from the Year after the Oxford Parliament (1259) to the Commencement of the Continental War (1793)* (Oxford, 1882), 3: 518-43.

<sup>179</sup> M. Rubin, *Charity and Community in Medieval Cambridge* (Cambridge, 1987), p. 86.

<sup>180</sup> Medieval hospitals were a particularly urban phenomenon. In Yorkshire 58 of the 72 hospitals were founded in or near towns: R. Gilchrist, 'Christian Bodies and Souls: The Archaeology of Life and Death in Later Medieval Hospitals', in S. Bassett (ed.) *Death in Towns: Urban Responses to the Dying and the Dead* (Leicester, 1992), p. 101.



genuine compassion, it was simultaneously a product of shrewd calculation: charitable deeds were an excellent way of buying salvation and demonstrating Christian principles.<sup>181</sup> In other words, the emphasis lay not so much upon the plight of the needy but on the state of the soul of the giver. While the generosity of a benefactor of a medieval hospital may have assisted the poor sick, it also assisted his own passage into the afterlife; the existence in society of those unable to look after themselves was part of God's plan of salvation.<sup>182</sup>

As a result, the importance of praying for the souls of one's benefactors was stressed in hospital ordinances.<sup>183</sup> Moreover, the state of the soul of the inmate was of prime importance; the need to make a good death was at least as important as the need to preserve life. The 1364 visitation of St Leonard's, York, places the function of the infirmary chaplains, who were appointed to hear the confessions of the inmates, to administer the sacrament, and to encourage penitence, above those of the lay sisters, who were appointed to minister to the bodily needs of the sick.<sup>184</sup> Similarly, the organisation and layout of medieval hospitals was largely determined by the need to provide for the spiritual needs of the inmates; the standard hospital layout was to build the infirmary on an east-west axis, with a chapel at the east end, like the nave and chancel of a parish church.<sup>185</sup> Thus arranged, the inmates of the infirmary could view the daily celebration of the Mass from their beds.<sup>186</sup> This was important because of the perceived physical and spiritual curative powers which the Eucharist was thought to possess.<sup>187</sup> The moment of the elevation of the Host marked the moment of its consecration and came to be thought of having of itself sacramental efficiency: to see

---

<sup>181</sup> B. Geremek, *Poverty: A History*, trans. A. Kolakowska (Oxford, 1994), p. 17. 'For ryght as watur quenches fyre, ryght so amus dede quenches synne': W. O. Ross (ed.), *Middle English Sermons Edited from British Museum MS Royal 18 B. xxiii*, EETS, OS 209 (London, 1940), p. 32. As the ghost instructs Guinevere: 'þe praier of þe poer may puchas þe pes,/ Of þase þat 3ellis at thi 3ete/ Whan þou art set in þi sete,/ With al merthes at mete/ and dayntes on des': R. Hanna III (ed.) *The Awntyrs of Arthure at Terne Wathelyn* (Manchester, 1974), ll. 178-82. Cited in R. Hanna, 'Feasting in Middle English Alliterative Poetry', in S. Powell and J. J. Smith (eds.), *New Perspectives on Middle English Texts: A Festschrift for R. A. Waldron* (Cambridge, 2000), p. 39.

<sup>182</sup> Geremek, *Poverty*, p. 20.

<sup>183</sup> N. Orme and M. Webster, *The English Hospital 1070-1570* (London, 1995), p. 52.

<sup>184</sup> Seymour, 'The Organisation, Personnel and Functions of the Medieval Hospital', Appendix I, p. 334.

<sup>185</sup> Orme and Webster, *The English Hospital*, p. 89. See, for example, the ground plan of St Mary's, Chichester: W. H. Godfrey, *The English Almshouse with Some Account of its Predecessor, the Medieval Hospital* (London, 1955), pp. 20, 34, 39.

<sup>186</sup> R. Gilchrist, *Contemplation and Action: The Other Monasticism* (London, 1995), p. 17.

<sup>187</sup> In a sermon in 1375, Bishop Brinton of Exeter taught that after seeing God's body no need for food would be felt, oaths would be forgiven, eye-sight would not fade, sudden death would not strike, nor would one age, and one would be protected at every step by angels: M. Rubin, *Corpus Christi: The Eucharist in Late Medieval Culture* (Cambridge, 1991), p. 63.



was to eat.<sup>188</sup> Thus it was not uncommon for infirmaries to be constructed so that the inmates were able to partake of the physical and spiritual sustenance afforded by the sight of the Host.<sup>189</sup>

In a society in which care of the soul was given primacy over care of the body it is hardly surprising that medieval medical theories regarding the importance of food to health were neglected. A number of hospitals were almost entirely dependent for their income upon begging. For example, St Mary of Bethlehem was dependent upon the proceeds from alms boxes and gifts of food from London citizens.<sup>190</sup> St Anthony's, London, was slightly better off as it had obtained a unique municipal privilege which allowed it to keep pigs considered unfit for sale.<sup>191</sup> Attitudes towards the type of food provided for the poor, infirm, and sick, at least at one end of the spectrum, tended towards a belief that unwholesome food was most fitting for those in unwholesome health. For example, Scottish borough custom decreed that corrupt pork or salmon should be confiscated and given to lepers, while the *Leges Forestarum* assigned to 'lepir men...to pur folk and to sek' any dead beasts found abandoned in suspicious circumstances.<sup>192</sup> Likewise, the York Civic Ordinances of 1301 decreed that if a butcher were convicted of wrong-doing then his 'measly meat' should go to the lepers.<sup>193</sup> The idea seems to have been that just as food given to the poor should be of low status, to match the condition of the pauper, so corrupt food should be given to those who were

<sup>188</sup> In the Middle English poem *On the Feast of Corpus Christi*, the Jew witnessing the Mass sees the Host on elevation transformed into a 'ffeir child' from which flies another child to each of the communicants to be consumed: C. Horstman (ed.), *The Minor Poems of the Vernon MS: Part I*, EETS, OS 98 (London, 1892), p. 175. For the anchoress it was the sight of the elevation of the Host which inspired her to mystical union with Christ: J. R. R. Tolkien (ed.), *The English Text of the Ancrene Riwe Edited from MS Corpus Christi College Cambridge 402*, EETS, OS 249 (London, 1962), pp 20-21.

<sup>189</sup> The foundation statutes (1355-56) of St Mary's, Newarke, Leicester, state that the inmates should lodge in a house with the chapel attached, in which Mass was to be celebrated every day, 'so that such poor folk abiding and being in the house, may be able devoutly to behold the elevation of the Body of Christ': A. Hamilton Thompson, *The History of the Hospital and the New College of the Annunciation of St Mary in the Newarke, Leicester* (Leicester, 1937), p. 47. Similarly, the inmates of the infirmary located in the undercroft of the Merchant Adventurers' Guildhall, York would have been able to see constantly the pyx hanging in the chapel: '*desuper altare ejusdem capelle in vase mundo pendendi, pane et aquam*': M. Sellers, *The York Mercers and Merchant Adventurers 1356-1917*, Surtees Society 129 (1917), p. 31.

<sup>190</sup> Seymour, 'The Organisation, Personnel and Functions of the Medieval Hospital', pp. 139-40.

<sup>191</sup> 'I remember that the Officers charged with ouersight of the Markets in this citie, did diuers time take from the Market people pigs starued or otherwise vnwholesome for man's sustenance, these they slit in the eare: one of the Proctors for saint Anthonies tyed a Bell about the necke and let it feede on the Dunguehils, no man would hurt, or take them vp ... if such a pig grew to be fat, & came to good liking (as oft times they did) then the Proctor would take him vp to the vse of the hospitall: C. L. Kingsford, *A Survey of London By John Stow Reprinted from the Text of 1603*, (Oxford 1908), 1: 184.

<sup>192</sup> Rawcliffe, *Medicine for the Soul*, p. 13. On the relationship between social status and the status of food consumed see S. Trigg (ed.), *Wynnere and Wastoure*, EETS, OS 297 (1990), p. 13, ll. 378-83.

<sup>193</sup> M. Prestwick, *York Civic Ordinances, 1301*, Borthwick Paper 49 (York, 1976), p. 13.



physically corrupted.

Of course, not all attitudes towards the sick and infirm were so harsh. At the other end of the spectrum were those who believed that good quality food benefited the sick and should, therefore be given to them. For example, just as at St Leonard's, York, provision was made for those too sick to consume the normal issue of food, so at St James' Hospital, Northallerton, the procurator was instructed that any delicacies were to be given to the most needy of sick.<sup>194</sup> A similar idea probably lies behind the bequest by William de Haverill to St Bartholomew's, Smithfield, for the purchase of white bread each day for the poor.<sup>195</sup> Likewise, the lepers at both Sherburn and St Julian's, St Albans were to have a certain proportion of their bread as high quality white bread.<sup>196</sup> Moreover, the regulations of Sherburn stated that particular care was to be taken that nothing bad, mouldy, or rotten should be issued to the sick.<sup>197</sup> In general, however, the diet of the inmates of the medieval hospital undoubtedly depended on the wealth of the hospital and the whims of its administrators. In 1302 a complaint was sent to the Archbishop of York stating that the inmates of St Mary of Bethlehem were entirely dependent for food on the broken meat sent from the tables of the citizens of London.<sup>198</sup> They must also have suffered a century later when its treasurer, Peter Tavener, was accused<sup>of</sup> selling to the inmates the food sent in daily by charitable citizens.<sup>199</sup> On the whole it is reasonable to conclude that there is no evidence to suggest that the sick poor in medieval hospitals were treated to a dietary regime specifically designed to promote health. Perhaps the hospitals most valuable contribution to health can be seen as providing sustenance to those who otherwise might have starved. Chaucer was quite correct to have his tongue firmly lodged in his cheek when he wrote of medical theories in the habitations of the poor.

### **Lydgate's 'Dietary'**

Thus far, as would be expected, my discussion of food in medical texts has

<sup>194</sup> Cullum, 'Hospitals and Charitable Provision', p. 61.

<sup>195</sup> Kerling (ed.), *Cartulary of St Bartholomew's Hospital*, p. 80. Boorde's *Dyetary* states that bread 'made of fyne flower...doth nourysshe moche yf it be truely ordered and well baken' and that bread with the 'brande abstracted and abiected...is good for all ages', whereas bread of lower quality 'maye fyll the gutte, but...shall neuer do good to man': Furnivall (ed.), *Andrew Boorde's Introduction and Dyetary*, pp. 258-59.

<sup>196</sup> P. Richards, *The Medieval Leper and His Northern Heirs* (Cambridge, 1977), Appendix 2, p. 126 and Appendix 3, p. 133.

<sup>197</sup> *Ibid.*, Appendix 2, p. 127.

<sup>198</sup> O'Donoghue, *The Story of Bethlehem Hospital*, p. 13.

<sup>199</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 76.



focused upon the health of the individual. Health after all is a very individual concern. More significantly, if one bears in mind the ways in which moral considerations entered almost all aspects of medieval life, it is strange to note that moral considerations are almost entirely absent in these medical texts. Their role as practical working texts is emphasised by the resolutely practical nature of the advice they give: there is almost no moral weighting to any of the advice they give. For example, although the *Compendium medicinae* gives advice regarding the avoidance of the company of women, it does so without any thought to the state of the patient's soul; concern is only shown regarding physical health.<sup>200</sup> The only real intrusion of religious concerns into the text is to be found in the instructions for the treatment of 'þe demegreyn', which suggest the recitation of a collect 'in worship of Seynt Joon Baptist' whilst applying a 'plastir' of 'sangdragon'.<sup>201</sup> Likewise, the diet and bloodletting text advises in July to 'kepe the fro lecherye, for thy brayne, for thanne gadereth wycked humors'.<sup>202</sup> This advice given regarding the avoidance of lechery is given without moral implications; the concern is only for the state of the man's physical health rather than his spiritual health.<sup>203</sup> If one looks at the 'Dietary' of John Lydgate (c. 1370-1449), however, one finds a text which is almost as much concerned with the social and moral aspects of health as the physical well-being of the individual.

Lydgate's 'Dietary', described by Derek Pearsall as 'by far the most widely disseminated of all Lydgate's poems', was an enormously popular text in the Middle Ages and is extant in over fifty manuscripts.<sup>204</sup> Perhaps more significantly, whereas the other texts I have considered appear only in collection with other medical texts, Lydgate's 'Dietary' is found not only alongside other medical texts, but with religious works and in collections of literary texts.<sup>205</sup> Despite its huge popularity during the Middle

<sup>200</sup> See, for example, the advice given for headache: Getz (ed.), *Healing and Society*, p. 1.

<sup>201</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 5-6.

<sup>202</sup> Mooney, 'Diet and Bloodletting', 252.

<sup>203</sup> It should be noted, however, that some kind of moral considerations intrude into *The Gouernayle of Helthe* regarding this issue. Although sexual intercourse is one of those forms of exercise considered beneficial to 'yonge men that ben lusty', it remarks that this is 'goode and helpyng in gouernyng of helth to body but not to soule, except to them that mowen haue it by Goddes lawes': Blades (ed.), *the Gouernayle of Helthe*, xiv-xv.

<sup>204</sup> D. Pearsall, *John Lydgate* (London, 1970), p. 219.

<sup>205</sup> The extant manuscripts of the 'Dietary' are listed in A. Renouir and C. D. Benson, 'John Lydgate', in A. E. Hartung (ed.), *A Manual of the Writings in Middle English 1050-1500* (New Haven, 1980): 6: 2092-93. In Oxford, University College, MS 60 it is found alongside sermons and other religious writings: H. O. Cox, *Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Oxford Colleges* (1852; repr. East Ardsley, 1972), pp. 18-19; in Oxford, Bodleian, MS Bodley 48 it is found alongside the works of Richard Rolle, the *Speculum vitae*, *The Canterbury Tales*, Lives of Saints, and other works of Lydgate: F. Madan and H. H. E. Craster, *A Summary Catalogue of Western Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library at Oxford: Vol. II. Part I* (Oxford,



Ages, it has been largely ignored by medical historians and literary scholars alike.<sup>206</sup> As the medical advice it gives is both conventional and rudimentary, it has little about it which is attractive to the medical historian; whereas, its very practical and didactic nature has resulted in it being passed over by traditional literary scholars. I would argue, however, that the 'Dietary' is worthy of attention because of the information it provides concerning the structuring of medieval society, which it achieves by paying particular attention to behaviour at the table.

The 'Dietary' opens as follows:

Fro helthe of body keep fro cold thyn hed,  
Ete no rawe mete, take good heed herto,  
Drynk holsom wyn, feede the on lyht bred,  
With an appetite ryse from thi mete also,  
With women aged fleshly have na a do,  
Vpon thy sleep drynk neuyr of thi cuppe,  
Glad toward bedde and at morwe, bothe too,  
And vse nevir late for to suppe (ll. 25-32).<sup>207</sup>

Thus, it presents the standard, basic advice regarding the Non-Naturals which one might expect from in any dietary. In the space of a single short stanza one is advised upon what one should be eating and drinking and at what time, when to sleep and rise, the climates to avoid, and even the kind of woman with whom one should avoid having sexual intercourse. In the stanzas which follow the reader is told what kind of airs one should breathe, the types of exercise good for health, the kind of state of mind one should strive to adopt, and the specific wines, herbs, and foodstuffs beneficial to the individual's health. Like the *Gouernayle of Helthe*, alongside which it is sometimes found, it is primarily concerned with the idea of moderation. The text's advice regarding diet might be summed up in its statement, 'Moderat diet ageyns al seeknesse,/ Is best phisicien' (ll. 87-88). Although specific information is given about matters such as the kinds of foods and drinks to consume and the types of herbs which will prove beneficial

---

1922), pp. 410-411; in BL MS Additional 31042 (the London Thornton MS) it is found alongside the *Cursor mundi*, the *Northern Passion*, the *Siege of Jerusalem*, the *Romance of Duke Rowland and Sir Otuell of Spayne*, other works of Lydgate, and other religious texts: J. J. Thompson, *Robert Thornton and the London Thornton Manuscript; British Library MS Additional 31042* (Cambridge, 1987), pp. 10-18.

<sup>206</sup> The 'Dietary' is often briefly mentioned in general texts dealing with medieval medicine, such as Rawcliffe, *Medicine and Society*, p. 37. An edition of the text along with a rudimentary introduction is to be found in M. Förster, 'John Lydgate's "Gesundheitsregeln"', *Anglia* 42 (1918):176-91. It is also briefly discussed in C. F. Mullet, 'John Lydgate: A Mirror of Medieval Medicine', *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 22 (1948): 403-15.

<sup>207</sup> All quotations from Lydgate's 'Dietary' are taken from BL, MS Lansdowne 699, which has the 'Doctrine for Pestilence' attached. This is printed in H. N. MacCracken (ed.), *The Minor Poems of John Lydgate: Part II - Secular Poems*, EETS, OS 192 (1934; repr., London: Oxford University Press, 1961), 702-707.



medicines, the advice is generally of a less precise nature. For example, it stresses the dangers to health of gluttony, drunkenness, and the eating of late suppers. The advice it offers the reader with regards to the Non-Naturals is of a very vague and general nature. Thus, it clearly falls into the same sort of category as the other dietaries I have examined in this chapter, giving general lifestyle information to a broad audience.

Although one would expect the focus of a dietary to be primarily on aspects of physical health, in fact, a great deal of time is spent on moral issues and also the organisation of the household. Indeed, a change in emphasis can be detected at the point in the text when the reader is advised as to how to proceed if physicians fail to give adequate advice (l. 97). Whereas prior to this point the subject matter is primarily directed towards matters clearly concerned specifically with the physical health of the individual, subsequently, although information is given which concerns the individual's health, the focus seems to be on moral matters and issues concerning social interaction. Consequently, perhaps a more useful reading of Lydgate's 'Dietary' could be undertaken in the light of more general, moralising texts from the medieval period, such as the 'Instructions for a Devout and Literate Layman', which is primarily concerned with structuring the spiritual life of an urban household around rituals of the table, or conduct texts, which focus on facilitating social interaction.<sup>208</sup>

Although ostensibly of an entirely different genre to moralising texts or conduct literature, Lydgate's 'Dietary' shows many of the same concerns. Like the 'Instructions for a Devout and Literate Layman', the 'Dietary' is written with the householder in mind, for it instructs the reader, 'Aftir thi rente mayntene thyn household' (l. 148). The status of household is that of the middling sort as it advises the reader to avoid disagreement with 'thi bettir', 'thi felaw', and 'thi soget' (ll. 124-26). In the 'Dietary' the individual to which the advice is directed is located firmly within both his own household and also society at large, the household table functioning, as in the 'Instructions', as the locus of social cohesion. The 'Dietary' moves with ease from clear medical instructions directed towards the health of the individual to moral advice

---

<sup>208</sup> An edition of the Latin 'Instructions for a Devout and Literate Layman' and a modern English translation can be found in, W. A. Pantin, 'Instructions for a Devout and Literate Layman', in J. J. G. Alexander and M. T. Gibson (eds.), *Literature and Learning: Essays Presented to Richard William Hunt* (Oxford, 1976), pp. 398-400, 420-22. I discuss this short text in detail in Chapter 3. In a recent article on Lydgate's 'Dietary', Claire Sponsler deals with the text exclusively as a conduct text: C. Sponsler, 'Eating Lessons: Lydgate's "Dietary" and Consumer Conduct', in K. Ashley and R. L. A. Clark (eds.), *Medieval Conduct* (London, 2001), pp. 1-22. Although this is an interesting article on a text which deserves more attention, her argument is flawed by her failure to locate the 'Dietary' within medieval medical discourse.



regarding sociable behaviour. As stated above, the key to all the advice given is the idea of moderation, which is applied to both the body and the soul. Just as the body's health is preserved by 'Moderat foode' (l. 163), so the health of the soul is preserved through 'charite' (l. 165), for charity is seen in the text as the means by which excesses are redistributed to the needy.

The second part of the 'Dietary' is profoundly concerned with social issues. The healthy householder is to do his duty to the poor and to live in 'rest and pes' (l. 120) with his neighbour. Entailed within this advice, which on occasion has the ring of sumptuary legislation to it, is the idea of a fixed and correct social order. Just as the householder is instructed to keep his household according to his status, so he is told to be 'mery lik thi degre' (l. 103), 'clenly claad aftir thyn estat' (l. 121), and to eat 'Foode accordyng to the complexioun' (l. 93). By implication, a man's social status is perceived as an inevitable truth like his complexion. Indeed, the 'Dietary' is at pains to point out that one of the ways to ensure continued good health is to be content with one's lot: 'Meeke in trouble, glad in pouerte,/ Riche with litel, content with suffisaunce,/ Nevir grucchyng' (ll. 101-3). Moreover, just as a man's health is to be nurtured by the foods consumed at his table, so stable social relations are to be fostered at that same table. The man who wishes to remain healthy is advised to avoid foods which will upset his humoral balance; likewise, the company of those who will upset the social equilibrium are to be avoided at the table: 'Have in hate mouthis that be double,/ Suffre at thi table no detraccioun' (ll. 113-14).

There is a notable slippage between the idea of consumption and conversation:

Curteis of language, of fedyng mesurable,  
On sondry metis not gredy atte table,  
In feedyng gentil, prudent in daliaunce,  
Cloos of tungge, of worde nat deceivable,  
To sei the best set alwey thi plesaunce (ll. 108-12).<sup>209</sup>

The text moves seamlessly from ideas concerning restrained eating habits to concepts of cautious conversational practices. Within the mind of the poet the two seem to form part of a single strand of human activity. In a similar manner, just as 'Greedi souper & drynkyng late at eve' (l. 73) are thought to cause physical illness through the production of superfluous phlegm, so 'rer sopers' and 'gret excesse' (l. 138) are thought to

---

<sup>209</sup> Speech and eating were closely related in the Middle Ages. There were thought to be two sins of the tongue, gluttony and blasphemy, which were inevitably seen to be interconnected. This is discussed further in Chapter 3.



engender social ills via vicious behaviour. Within the ‘Dietary’, that which affects the self and that which affects society-at-large are so closely inter-linked as to be, at times, indistinguishable. The advice given by the text on preserving the health of the individual exists in a continuum with that concerning the smooth-running of both the household and society. The focus of the text is as much on the fitness of the individual in the household and general society as it is on the private health of the individual. The table is the place at which not only is the physical body fed with the necessary food to make it healthy, but the spiritual and social body is also provided with that which is necessary to make it fit and sound.

Lydgate’s ‘Dietary’ strives for the incorporation of the individual in society through the moral weighting it gives to its advice regarding lifestyle issues. Unlike the other dietaries considered, which are purely practical texts and, as a result, lacking in moral considerations regarding the medicinal advice they give, Lydgate’s ‘Dietary’ is profoundly concerned with moral matters. Moreover, these moral concerns extend beyond the conscience of the individual to the structuring of a wider society. Its overall interest appears to be as much with the oiling of the cogs of communal interaction as with the maintenance of the health of the individual. Thus, although this text has significant features in common with other medieval dietaries, its interests diverge from those of the more traditional medical texts. Consequently, the ‘Dietary’ can be read in a fashion similar to overtly moralising texts, concerned with the structure of the household, and conduct texts, which aim to facilitate social interaction. As such, therefore, Lydgate’s ‘Dietary’ should perhaps be classified as falling somewhere between medical treatises, moral instructional literature, and conduct literature.<sup>210</sup> Indeed, it may be the very fact that this text cuts across genres that ensured its popularity in its own time, as well as securing its neglect in ours.

In this chapter I have shown how even in the most personal and individual issue, health, food and eating habits can be seen to have a social and moral dimension. Ideas surrounding food and the table can clearly be seen to fit in with broader conceptions of the self and society. In the following chapters I shall go on to explore further issues of sociability issues and morality which are expressed in behaviour surrounding food. In the next chapter I shall explore its crucial role in the smooth-running of the city at large.

---

<sup>210</sup> It should be borne in mind that Lydgate was himself the author of both religious texts and conduct texts.



## Necessity: Civic Concerns Regarding Food Provisioning

### Introduction

The opening of *Piers Plowman* depicts the ‘fair feeld ful of folk’ all ‘Werchyng and wandryng as the world asketh’.<sup>1</sup> Langland refers specifically to those devoted to virtuous industry who plough the land, ‘settyng and sowynge’, and then, in a pejorative fashion, to those who dress themselves according to the dictates of ‘pride’.<sup>2</sup> The significance of these references to food (and drink) and clothing is revealed in Passus I, when Holy Church informs Will of the ‘three thynges’ necessary to man to enable him to fulfil his spiritual devotions:

That oon is vesture from chele thee to save,  
And mete at meel for mysese of thiselve,  
And drynke whan thow driest...<sup>3</sup>

Holy Church suggests that these necessities will be provided by ‘the erthe’ at the command of God.<sup>4</sup> What is suggested here is not the passive reception of necessities in the “manna-from-heaven” mode, but rather, to return to the model of society set forth in the Prologue, a community in which each person labours, according to ability, in order to produce the food, drink and clothing which ensure the smooth running of society.<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> William Langland, *The Vision of Piers Plowman*, ed. A. V. C. Schmidt, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (London, 1995), p. 2, ll. 17, 19.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, ll. 20-24.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 15, ll. 20, 23-25. The spiritual destruction caused by lack of ‘vetaille and vesture’ is beautifully captured in *Peter Idley’s Instructions to His Son*: ‘Nede of alle synnes is chieff modre and Queene;/ She dryueth a man to thefte and murdre alsoo;/ [...] better were to be slayne with knyffe/ Then to be nede and fynalli to leese thy lyffe;/ ffor both body and soule that ladde sleith,/ Thus is she worse than naturall deth’: C. D’Evelyn (ed.), *Peter Idley’s Instructions to His Son* (Oxford, 1935), pp. 92-93, ll. 673, 708-9, 718-21.

<sup>4</sup> Langland, *Piers Plowman*, p. 14, l. 17.

<sup>5</sup> The necessities of life, and in particular the means by which those who reject normal modes of labour and follow a life of voluntary poverty are provided for, is a theme that is considered by Langland on several occasions in this text. For example, in Passus XV Langland discusses the Desert Fathers who lived as ascetics, but who were fed by birds and animals sent by God. This could clearly be seen as referring to the friars who have adopted voluntary poverty, suggesting that they should passively trust to God to provide for their needs. Langland, however, accepts that times have changed; in Passus XX it is Need himself who articulates the problems associated with voluntary poverty: ‘for thei are povere, paraventure, for patrymoyne hem failleth,/ Thei wol flatere, to fare wel, folk that ben riche’, *ibid.*, p. 355, ll. 234-35. Despite Conscience’s promise to provide the friars with ‘breed and clothes/ And other necessities ynowe’ if they will enter Holy Church and live according to their rules, the friars evade Conscience and the Church and continue to exert their subversive influence on society, *ibid.*, ll. 248-49. The fact that *Piers Plowman* ends with Conscience setting off in part to find a means of controlling the behaviour of the friars reveals how central the idea of bodily necessity is to this text devoted to spiritual concerns. There is too large a body of secondary criticism on these issues to cover here; in addition to other texts mentioned in this chapter, an introduction can be found in R. Adams, ‘The Nature of Need in *Piers Plowman* XX’, *Traditio* 34 (1978): 273-301; L. O. Fradenburg, ‘Needful Things’, in B. A. Hanawalt and D. Wallace (eds.), *Medieval Crime and Social Control* (London, 1999), pp. 49-69; for a discussion of Langland’s ordering of society see J. Simpson, ‘“After Craftes Conseil clotheth yow and fede”: Langland and London City Politics’, in N. Rogers (ed.), *England in the Fourteenth century: Proceedings of the 1991 Harlaxton Symposium* (Stamford, 1993), pp. 109-127.



This ideal of society is, however, precariously balanced; it is a system which can easily be upset by ‘wastours’ who ‘with glotonye destruyeth’ the winnings of hard toil.<sup>6</sup> If one bears in mind the fact that there is an inevitable tension inherent to life in towns, in as much as towns are unable to supply all their food requirements independently and are thus have to rely upon a rural hinterland for the provision of their bodily needs, it is perhaps unsurprising that Passus VI implicitly sets up this opposition between winners and wasters as being between the productivity of the countryside and the consumption of the town. In the period following the Black Death the labour market was restructured as rural workers migrated to towns where they might receive better remuneration for their labour, consequently many ploughmen ‘abandoned tillage to go into urban employment’.<sup>7</sup> In addition to those immigrants who entered the towns seeking work, there were also the so-called “sturdy beggars” who lived off charity despite their ability to work.<sup>8</sup> Thus, in *Piers Plowman* it is shown that while the industrious peasant ploughs his field, the food that is produced is undeservingly consumed by the ‘Bolde beggeris and big that mowe hir breed biswynke’.<sup>9</sup> These itinerant workers, who were perceived as resorting to begging rather than honestly earning their living, were the plague of towns in the later period and, as a result, were the subject of much legislation.<sup>10</sup> Langland, however, finds a much more practical solution to the problem in the form of Hunger.<sup>11</sup>

Passus VI opens with the construction of another society in which each person has his or her productive place. As this society is organised from the bottom up, by Piers the Ploughman rather than the King or government administration, it is unsurprising that food is central to its organisational concerns. In Piers’ society all are to be given the food they need to live; even the ‘nedy and the naked’ are provided for.<sup>12</sup> Piers’ only proviso is that all help ‘hym to werche wightliche [vigorously] that wynneth youre

---

<sup>6</sup> Langland, *Piers Plowman*, p. 2, l. 22.

<sup>7</sup> R. H. Britnell, *The Commercialisation of English Society 1000-1500* (Cambridge, 1993), p. 166.

<sup>8</sup> See C. Dyer, *Making a Living in the Middle Ages: The People of Britain 850-1520* (London, 2002), p. 279.

<sup>9</sup> Langland, *Piers Plowman*, p. 104, l. 213.

<sup>10</sup> See D. Pearsall, ‘Poverty and Poor People in *Piers Plowman*’, in E. D. Kennedy, R. Waldron, and J. S. Wittig (eds.), *Medieval English Studies Presented to George Kane* (Woodbridge, 1988), p. 176.

<sup>11</sup> A full discussion of the way in which Langland confronts the problem of the able-bodied poor is to be found in D. Aers, ‘*Piers Plowman* and Problems in the Perception of Poverty: A Culture in Transition’, *Leeds Studies in English*, NS 14 (1983): 5-25; and D. Aers, ‘*Piers Plowman*: Poverty, Work, and Community’, in *Community, Gender, and Individual Identity: English Writing 1360-1430* (London, 1988), pp. 20-72.

<sup>12</sup> Langland, *Piers Plowman*, p. 95, l. 15.



foode'.<sup>13</sup> All goes well until some of the workers feel disinclined to labour: 'seten some and songen atte nale', the 'wastours' who 'wasten that men wynnen with travaille and with tene'.<sup>14</sup> When the knight attempts to restore order he is ignored and Piers calls upon Hunger to remedy the situation. The results are dramatic: the 'wastours' flee to the barns and thresh corn 'fro morwe til even' for a mere 'potful of peses' - the ultimate model of subsistence labour.<sup>15</sup> Hunger can, therefore, be viewed in a positive light, as the motive force for labour. This is belied, however, by the violence of the language in the description of Hunger's actions:

Hunger in haste thoo hent Wastour by the mawe  
And wrong hym so by the wombe that al watrede his eighen.  
He buffeted the Bretoner aboute the chekes  
That he loked lik a lanterne al his lif after.  
He bette hem so bothe, he brast ner hire guttes.<sup>16</sup>

One can see in this description the cruelly deforming capacity of extreme hunger, an effect which is heightened by the unstoppable nature of Hunger's progress. Once Hunger has achieved his aim and set the 'wastours' back to work Piers asks him to leave, but Hunger declines, declaring "'hennes ne wole I wende/ Er I have dyned bi this day and ydronke bothe'".<sup>17</sup> There follows an account of the 'povere peple' bringing seemingly endless supplies of food to assuage the appetite of Hunger, who 'eet in haste and axed after moore'.<sup>18</sup> Hunger is transformed into an almost insatiable, consuming monster.

As the Passus draws to a close the 'wastours' return to their idle ways, but the warning is delivered, 'wynneth whil ye mowe', because of the impending arrival of Hunger.<sup>19</sup> Thus, once again Hunger is figured as the motivating force for honest toil. The tone of the Passus has changed, however: whereas before Hunger's assistance had been invited by Piers, now he is depicted as an inevitable and unwelcome blight. Indeed, with the reference to 'flodes' and 'the sonne amys' an apocalyptic edge has entered the text.<sup>20</sup> If Hunger had been seen previously as a means of returning structure and productivity to society, now he is shown to be the root of chaos and the destruction

---

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 96, l. 20.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 100, l. 115; p. 101, ll. 130, 133.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 103, ll. 183-86.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 103, ll. 174-79.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 108, ll. 277-78.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 109, ll. 291, 295.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 110, l. 319.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 111, ll. 322, 325.



of an ordered community. A society which has Hunger at its heart is a site of conflict. This point is brought out more clearly in the C-Text. When Langland returns later in the text to the problem of famine he suggests that mankind is again the root of the problem, for they do not do their duty as do ‘þe sonne and the mone’. If men did then there would be no famine, rather there would be ‘be *plente* and *pees perpetuel* euer’.<sup>21</sup> In other words, as emphasised by the alliterative link, for a society to be at peace it must be ensured of an adequate food supply by the disciplining of the population into productive labour.

Hunger was seen in the Middle Ages as having the power to break down even the strongest of family ties. For example, in *The Siege of Rouen*, where the inhabitants of the besieged city are reduced to eating ‘doggy’s’, ‘cattys’, ‘mysse, horse and rattys’, even the bonds between mother and child are destroyed:

Yf the chylde schulde be dede,  
The modyr wolde not gyf hyt bredde,  
Ne nought wolde parte hyt a scheve [share with it a sheaf]  
Thoughe sche wyste to save hys lyve;  
Ne the chylde the modyr gyffe.<sup>22</sup>

It would be expected, therefore, that civic governments would be deeply concerned to avoid a dearth of food. As towns relied primarily on food imported from outside, particular care had to be taken to avoid the food shortages caused by both seasonal changes and environmental problems. Of course, legislation cannot prevent droughts or floods but, as a modern economist points out, starvation ‘is the characteristic of some people not *having* enough to eat. It is not the characteristic of there *being* not enough to eat’.<sup>23</sup> The fundamental problem lies not with an insufficient volume of food to go round, but rather with the distribution of that food. Hence, efficient governmental policy

---

<sup>21</sup> G. Russell and G. Kane (eds.), *Piers Plowman: The C Version* (London, 1997), p. 546, ll. 92-94. My italics. On Langland’s treatment of famine see R. W. Frank, Jr., ‘The “Hungry Gap”, Crop Failure, and Famine: The Fourteenth-Century Agricultural Crisis and *Piers Plowman*’, *Yearbook of Langland Studies* 4 (1990): 87-104.

<sup>22</sup> J. Gairdner, *The Historical Collections of a Citizen of London in the Fifteenth Century: Containing John Page’s Poem on the Siege of Rouen, Lydgate’s Verses on the Kings of England, William Gregory’s Chronicle of London*, Camden Society NS 17 (1876), pp. 18-19. This text is found in a commonplace book thought to have belonged to one of the mayors of London (although probably not William Gregory as suggested by Kingsford): M.-R. McLaren, ‘The Textual Transmission of the London Chronicles’, *English Manuscript Studies 1100-1700* 3 (1992): 56-59; M.-R. McLaren, ‘The Aims and Interests of the London Chroniclers of the Fifteenth Century’, in D. J. Clayton, R. G. Davies, and P. Niven (eds.), *Trade, Devotion and Governance: Papers in Late Medieval History* (Stroud, 1994), p. 161.

<sup>23</sup> A. Sen, *Poverty and Famine: An Essay on Entitlement and Deprivation* (Oxford, 1981), p. 1. Cited in Frank, ‘The “Hungry Gap”’, p. 100. Here Sen is discussing modern famines and the idea of the global market; the same ability to avoid famine need not be entirely true of the Middle Ages. However, networks of storage and distribution clearly played an important role in the avoidance of famine in the medieval period.



should generally be sufficient to ensure the avoidance of a hungry populace (and thus to help to ensure a peaceful city).

If one looks at medieval literature, however, there is little sense of the city being organised to ensure food for all. For example, the satirical poem *Wynnere and Wastoure*, written in the second half of the fourteenth century, has an overtly suspicious view of urban consumption.<sup>24</sup> In the Prologue the narrative present looks forward to the ‘dredfull domesdaye’ presaged by various signs of degeneration.<sup>25</sup> Society is seen by the narrator as being in crisis and the stability of social order itself is threatened as ‘boyes of blode...wedde ladyes in londe’.<sup>26</sup> Indeed, the very fabric of life is seen to be at the point of disintegration. Remarkably, the stimulus for this out-pouring of apocalyptic anxiety seems to be the possible consequences of a ‘westren wy’ [western man] sending his son ‘southewarde’, presumably to the city of London.<sup>27</sup> The suggestion offered by the text is that the city and the urban way of life are the root of all social evil. The bulk of the poem is occupied by a debate between the two characters, Winner and Waster, which is arbitrated by the King. While Winner might appear to have moral superiority on purely semantic grounds, in fact the argument proves more balanced.<sup>28</sup> Neither Winner nor Waster is declared outright victor by the King, each being banished to the ‘lond þer he es loued moste’.<sup>29</sup> Significantly, Waster is sent to London, the place regarded with such mistrust in the Prologue. He is sent forth to ‘þe chepe’, the busy centre of London trade, and ordered to rent a ‘chambre’ there.<sup>30</sup> Moreover he is instructed to keep his

<sup>24</sup> For a discussion of the dating of the poem see E. Salter, ‘The Timeliness of *Wynnere and Wastoure*’, *Medium Aevum* 47 (1978): 40-65. Salter objects to Israel Gollancz’s specific dating of the poem to 1352-53, claiming that such categorical dating of the poem is impossible. She suggests that in fact the poem could date from much later in the century. John Scattergood, however, has returned to Gollancz’s 1352-53 dating on the grounds that the poem makes economic references specific to those years: J. Scattergood, ‘*Winner and Waster* and the Mid-Fourteenth-Century Economy’, in *The Lost Tradition: Essays on Middle English Alliterative Poetry* (Dublin, 2000), pp. 71-72

<sup>25</sup> E.g. waves ‘waxen ... wilde’, the collapse of ‘walles’, and hares crouching on hearth-stones as if in their lair: S. Trigg (ed.), *Wynnere and Wastoure*, EETS, OS 297 (1990), p. 3, ll. 16, 12-13. See T. Turville-Petre, ‘The Prologue of *Wynnere and Wastoure*’, *Leeds Studies in English*, NS 18 (1987): 20.

<sup>26</sup> Trigg (ed.), *Wynnere and Wastoure*, p. 3, ll. 14-15.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, ll. 7-8.

<sup>28</sup> S. Trigg, ‘The Rhetoric of Excess in *Winner and Waster*’, in S. Trigg (ed.), *Medieval English Poetry* (London, 1993), p. 187.

<sup>29</sup> Trigg (ed.), *Wynnere and Wastoure*, p. 15, l. 459. David Starkey argues that the debate is balanced because it explores the functioning of the great household, with its dual competing departments of Providence (Steward’s department) and Magnificence (Chamberlain’s department), resulting in the presentation of the essential public image of ‘prudential ostentation’: D. Starkey, ‘The Age of the Household: Politics, Society and Arts’, in S. Medcalf (ed.), *The Later Middle Ages* (London, 1981), p. 256. Lois Roney argues that the poem illustrates the economic policy of circular exchange. Winner and Waster each depicting bad examples of economic practice, L. Roney, ‘*Winner and Waster*’s “Wyse Wordes”: Teaching Economics in Fourteenth-Century England’, *Speculum* 69 (1994): 1070-1100.

<sup>30</sup> Trigg (ed.), *Wynnere and Wastoure*, p. 15, l. 474.



‘wyndowe...wyde’, in the manner reminiscent of a shop window, and to watch for ‘any petit beryn’ passing through the town, so that he can ‘Teche hym to þe tauerne’.<sup>31</sup> Once there, Waster is to get him drunk that night, then, in the morning, introduce him to the restorative powers of wine from Crete, and then take him to ‘Bred Strete’ to show him the hot food on offer there. The overall aim of this process is to entirely empty his purse: to ‘pyk hym so clene/ þat fynd a peny in his purse and put owte his eghe’.<sup>32</sup>

Hence at the end of the poem, as in the Prologue, London is perceived as a place of corruption and dishonesty, where the unwary purchaser will be conned by the street-wise vendor.<sup>33</sup> It is the place that lures the outsider in with promises of choice and plenty, and, then having emptied his purse of every last penny, drives ‘hym owt of the townn’.<sup>34</sup> In such a London, it is almost inevitable that amongst the town’s hucksters, cooks and taverners, such as Langland describes crying their wares of hot pies, good geese and pork, and various wines, the unsuspecting buyer would find unscrupulous salesmen, like Chaucer’s cook, who sells, in his fly-filled shop, pies with their gravy drawn off so that they keep longer, twice-heated pasties, and goose filled with putrid stuffing.<sup>35</sup> The unwary purchaser is constantly in danger of being defrauded by the city’s corrupt victuallers. Indeed, as Lady Meed points out, it is the brewers, bakers, butchers, and cooks who ‘are men on this molde that moost harm wercheth/ To the povere peple that parcelmele buggen’.<sup>36</sup>

The overwhelming image of the city is of an uncaring environment, in which the activities of its market-traders and shopkeepers go entirely unregulated on all levels, and where the naive shopper will be swindled and duped in his attempts to purchase the

---

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, ll. 475-77. See D. Keene, ‘Shops and Shopping in Medieval London’, in L. Grant (ed.), *Medieval Art, Architecture and Archaeology in London* (London, 1990), pp. 34-37. The meaning of ‘p[eti]t beryn’ is obscure. Trigg tentatively suggests ‘insignificant man’. A recent edition of the text transcribes the phrase as ‘potent beryn’, glossing it as ‘powerful man: E. Treharne, ed., *Old and Middle English: An Anthology* (Oxford, 2000), p. 519. I think it is clear, however, that the general sense of the phrase is a man with cash in his pocket.

<sup>32</sup> Trigg (ed.), *Wynnere and Wastoure* p. 16, ll. 480, 485-87.

<sup>33</sup> Trigg suggests that the author may himself have been one of the rural unwary duped in London by a ‘waster’: Trigg, ‘The Rhetoric of Excess’, p. 199.

<sup>34</sup> Trigg (ed.), *Wynnere and Wastoure*, p. 16, l. 489. This London, like the London experienced by the narrator of the *London Lickpenny*, is closed to the man with no money in his pocket: J. M. Dean (ed.), *Medieval English Political Writings*, TEAMS Middle English Texts Series (Kalamazoo, 1996), pp. 222-25.

<sup>35</sup> Langland, *Piers Plowman*, p. 13, ll. 226-30; Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Riverside Chaucer*, ed. L. Benson, 3<sup>rd</sup> edn (Oxford, 1987), p. 84, ll. 4346-52.

<sup>36</sup> Langland, *Piers Plowman*, p. 40, ll. 80-81. Gower relates at great length the various crimes of which the various victuallers were guilty: John Gower, *The Complete Works ... Vol. 1: The French Works*, ed. G. C. Macaulay (1901; repr. Michigan, 1968), pp. 288-92; Gower, *Mirour de l’homme (The Mirror of Mankind)*, trans. W. B. Wilson (East Lansing, 1992), pp. 341-45.



necessities of life. In fact, however, similar concerns are found in the rhetoric of civic legislation. If one looks briefly to medieval Siena one can see ideas surrounding adequate food provisioning and the consequent peace of the city at the heart of civic ideology. Between 1337 and 1340 Ambrogio Lorenzetti painted three large frescoes, which have come to be known as ‘Good Government’, ‘The Good City’ and ‘Bad Government and the Bad City’, in the Sala dei Nove in Siena.<sup>37</sup> As the Sala dei Nove was the meeting place of the Nine, Siena’s chief magistracy from 1287-1355, and the room in which the crucial decision-making processes of the republic took place, the frescoes can be seen as being embedded in a web of ideas, texts, and practices which constituted the political ideology of the republican regime.<sup>38</sup> These frescoes were commissioned by the Nine, and any visitor entering the Sala dei Nove would have been confronted by the sight of the Nine seated on a raised platform along the north wall, with the painted personifications of the virtues behind them.<sup>39</sup> Contemporary Siena and the frescoes would have further intersected as the fourth, southern wall contained a deep window embrasure, the room’s only source of light, which opened onto a panoramic view of Siena and the surrounding countryside.<sup>40</sup>

Clearly, therefore, these frescoes were part of a carefully-considered ideological scheme. Quentin Skinner has argued convincingly that the inspiration for these frescoes came from the body of political literature which flourished in the Italian city republics, in particular, Brunetto Latini’s *Li livres dou trésor*.<sup>41</sup> Moreover, not only do these frescoes embody contemporary Italian political ideals, they also incorporate more practical (and therefore less theorised) concerns regarding the running of the city. If one focuses on the ‘Good City’ scene on the east wall one can see that both the walled city and the surrounding countryside are clearly full of life. The city is a locus of trade, while

---

<sup>37</sup> It would be too time-consuming to describe in detail here the iconographic schemes incorporated into these frescoes. They have been discussed extensively by many critics; a good starting place for a reader coming new to this subject is a number of essays in D. Norman (ed.), *Siena, Florence, and Padua: Art, Society and Religion 1280-1400*, 2 volumes (London, 1995). As these frescoes are full of minute details it is impossible to produce adequate facsimiles in this thesis, therefore I suggest the reader consults the excellent reproductions in the above volumes.

<sup>38</sup> R. Starn and L. Partridge, ‘The Republican Regime of the Sala dei Nove in Siena, 1338-1340’, in R. Starn and L. Partridge, *Arts of Power: Three Halls of State in Italy 1300-1600* (Oxford, 1992), p. 13.

<sup>39</sup> Starn and Partridge, ‘The Republican Regime’, p. 18.

<sup>40</sup> D. Norman, ‘“Love Justice, You Who Judge the Earth”: The Paintings of the Sala dei Nove in the Palazzo Pubblico, Siena’, in Norman (ed.), *Siena, Florence and Padua*, 2: 145. Aspects of contemporary Siena, such as the *duomo* and the *Porto Romano* would have been clearly identifiable in the scene depicting the ‘Good City’.

<sup>41</sup> Q. Skinner, ‘Ambrogio Lorenzetti: The Artist as Political Philosopher’, *Proceedings of the British Academy* 72 (1986): 1-56.



the countryside is filled with peasant dwellings and inhabitants cultivating the land. On the far right of the painting is an expanse of water, identified as Talamone, the much-coveted port on the Tuscan coastline which was acquired by Siena in 1303.<sup>42</sup> It has been noted that the activities found within this fresco belong to the categories of activities traditionally associated in Italian art with spring and summer, and also with the *artes mechanicae*.<sup>43</sup> As such, therefore, the ‘Good City’ scene embodies virtuous productivity. Moreover, the city and the countryside are vitally connected to each other by the means of a busy commercial street. While the nobles ride out of the city to hunt in the countryside, the peasants make their way in with donkeys laden with wares to be sold in the market. Thus central to this painting is the idea of the circulation of goods, especially foodstuffs.

In addition<sup>44</sup> to these pictorially iconographic schemes are the written inscriptions in both Latin and Italian.<sup>44</sup> In the ‘Good City’, above the walled city and the countryside hovers a winged figure, labelled *Securitas* (Security), who holds a scroll bearing the inscription: ‘Let every man go about without fear, and let every man sow, while this lady [Justice] rules the land, for she has taken the power from all the guilty’.<sup>45</sup> Along the lower edge of the painting there is another inscription referring to Justice, which includes the line, ‘She guards and defends those who honour her, and nourishes and feeds them’.<sup>46</sup> By contrast, the inscription on the lower edge of the fresco depicting ‘Bad Government and the Bad City’, which describes the effects of tyranny, concludes, ‘Therefore his [Tyranny’s] entire land lies uncultivated’.<sup>47</sup> Hence, not only can it be implied from the pictorial representations that central to the concerns of these frescoes is the idea of how the populace is fed, it is also clearly set out in the inscriptions. Moreover, these inscriptions make evident the link between adequate food supply and

<sup>42</sup> Norman, ‘“Love Justice”’, p. 150.

<sup>43</sup> U. Feldges-Henning, ‘The Pictorial Programme of the Salla della Pace: A New Interpretation’, *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 35 (1972): 151.

<sup>44</sup> The inscriptions are transcribed in Feldges-Henning, ‘Pictorial Programme’, pp. 146-49.

<sup>45</sup> ‘*SENCA PAURA OGNUOM FRANCO CAMINI ELEVORANDO SEMINI CIASCUNO MENTRE CHE TAL COMUNE MANTERRA QUESTA DONNA IN SIGNORIA CHEL ALEVATA AREI OGNI BALIA*’, Feldges-Henning’s translation, ‘Pictorial Programme’, p. 147.

<sup>46</sup> ‘*ELLA QUARDAE DIFENDE CHI LEI ONORA E LOR NUTRICA E PASCIE*’, Feldges-Henning, ‘Pictorial Programme’, p. 148. My translation.

<sup>47</sup> ‘*UNDE OGNITERRA SUA IN CULTA GIACE*’, Feldges-Henning, ‘Pictorial Programme’, p. 149. My translation.



just government.<sup>48</sup> The perfect city is depicted as one in which the common good is paramount; it is the city where the civic authorities rule with the precepts of justice perpetually in sight, while those who are justly governed willingly pay taxes in recompense.<sup>49</sup> These frescoes, did not, however, merely passively reflect political ideology, they were actively involved in its constitution. Through the interplay of the real and ideal, which arose from their location in the space in which governmental decisions were taken, the frescoes would have contributed to the construction of civic ideology. Contemporary Siena and the depicted Siena of the frescoes would have intersected and reflected back on each other creating a practical and ideological continuum.

The scholar working on medieval England, unfortunately, lacks plainly articulated English political theories, such as those of Latini, or their pictorial expression in work such as the Sienese frescoes.<sup>50</sup> However, I think it is possible to trace similar concerns about food provisioning and the peaceful city, dating back to the end of the twelfth century and extending to the end of the medieval period, through an examination of civic legislation surrounding food supply and distribution within the city. Although it is tempting to regard articles of legislation as neutral texts, in reality they, like the Sienese frescoes, are ideologically loaded. It is my intention through a study of civic legislation to tease out the civic ideology which was involved in the creation of rules and laws concerning food sales and distribution. It is my contention that victualling legislation was created not merely to counter corruption directly, but also to instil a civic ideology which would actively pre-empt corruption. I believe that civic legislation can be perceived as a means by which citizens could be persuaded not only to tacitly accept but also to assist in the creation of a specific concept of the city.

---

<sup>48</sup> The presence of peace in the well-run and well-fed city (as suggested by *Piers Plowman*) is evident in the centrality of the figure Peace in the image of 'Good Government', from whose perspective, it has been suggested, all the activities within the painting are viewed: J. M. Greenstein, 'The Vision of Peace: Meaning and Representation in Ambrogio Lorenzetti's *Salla della Pace*', *Art History* 11 (1988): 497-98. The inter-relation of a well-fed populace and a peaceful city was not merely a complacent truism to the Sienese government, as food shortages in 1328-29 were the cause of riots within the city. A contemporary account of this can be found in T. Dean (ed. and trans.), *The Towns of Italy in the Later Middle Ages* (Manchester, 2000), pp. 172-74.

<sup>49</sup> The text along the lower edge of the fresco of the 'Good City' starts 'Turn your eyes, you who rule, to look carefully at her [Justice], who is for her glory presented and crowned here', while the text on the border of 'Good Government' states, 'For this reason, taxes, levies and lords' estates are given to him [the Common Good] in triumph, Feldges-Henning's translation, 'Pictorial Programme', pp. 146-48.

<sup>50</sup> In fact, Latini's political theories found their way into London civic documentation; selections from the *Livres* are found in Andrew Horn's fourteenth-century custumal, *Liber legum regum antiquorum*: S. Reynolds, 'Medieval History and the History of Political Thought', *Urban History Yearbook* 9 (1982): 22.



## Food Legislation

In the Middle Ages legislation regarding the sale of foodstuffs was in fact more prolific in many ways than today. Whereas today we are used to the idea of the “free market” and prices defined by demand, in the medieval period the state of affairs was rather different. To a large extent, the prices of foods were prescribed by either local or national legislation. In addition, great efforts were made to prevent the increase of the price of victuals without a concomitant increase in their value. Hence, the actions of forestallers, regrators, and hucksters were strictly curtailed. Many attempts were made to avoid the establishment of monopolies, with the influx of foreign victuallers being encouraged to assist this. This also served to ensure variety and plenty within the city. In order to appreciate the full range of the control that civic government held over the victualling trade it is necessary to look at the nature of legislation in some detail.

The most logical place to start is with the legislation of bread, as bread was the basic food for all citizens from the poorest to the richest: in York at the end of the thirteenth century bread was being distributed as alms by St Leonard’s hospital to prisoners and lepers, while in 1482 bread was amongst the gifts made by the city to the visiting Duke of Gloucester and Duke of Albany.<sup>51</sup> Significantly, the depiction of the 1370 London famine in *Piers Plowman* is expressed very much in terms of the lack of bread.<sup>52</sup> The famine is described by ‘Haukyn the Actif Man’ a ‘wafrer’, who first outlines the hard work that is entailed in being a baker:

... er I have breed of mele, ofte moot I swete,  
And er the commune have corn ynough many a cold morwenyng;  
So, er my wafres be ywrought, muche wo I tholye.<sup>53</sup>

---

<sup>51</sup> P. H. Cullum, ‘Hospitals and Charitable Provision in Medieval Yorkshire, 936-1547’, (Unpublished PhD Diss., York University, 1989), p. 192-93; *YHB*, 1: 259. The fact that bread and ale were considered the essential elements of medieval diet is evidenced by the fact that household accounts invariably list provisions purchased, starting with bread, then ale, and followed by other provisions such as meat and fish: C. M. Woolgar (ed.), *Household Accounts from Medieval England*, 2 vols., British Academy Record of Social and Economic History 17-18 (1992-93), *passim*.

<sup>52</sup> It is probably as result of this famine that on 24 April 1370 two cornmongers appeared before the mayor and aldermen, one for selling in the Newgate market bushels of corn where the top of the sack contained clean corn with inferior corn beneath, and the other for attempting to enhance the price of corn: *CLBG*, p. 261. In York in 1485 bread became scarce, not as a result of a lack of grain, but because the bakers went on strike. The bakers responsible for failing to keep the city supplied with bread were each fined 5 marks: *YHB*, 1: 370.

<sup>53</sup> Langland, *Piers Plowman*, pp. 216-218, ll. 273, 227, 261-63. Generally a ‘wafrer’ would be considered a baker at the top end of the market, perhaps the equivalent of a confectioner today. They would make ornamental breads and cakes and eucharistic wafers. Clearly Haukyn is a much more common kind of baker and it is probably Langland’s habitual desire to intertwine the spiritual and the material that causes him to refer to Haukyn thus.



He then goes on to describe the misery experienced by the common people when the supplies of bread did not reach the town:

Al Londoun, I leve, liketh wel my wafres,  
And louren whan thei lakked hem; it is noght longe ypassed  
There was a careful commune whan no cart com to towne  
With bake breed fro Stratford; tho gonnen beggeris wepe,  
And werkmen were agast a lite - this wole be thought longe;  
In the date of Oure Drighte, in a drye Aprill,  
A thousand and thre hundred, twies thritty and tene,  
My wafres there were gesene [scarce], whan Chichestre was maire.<sup>54</sup>

It was, no doubt, the fact that bread was central to the diets of even the poorest members of London society that prompted the mayor and aldermen in 1382 to proclaim that, in order to assist the poor, bakers should make bread at a farthing a piece, while simultaneously ordering £80 of farthings to be issued to facilitate this.<sup>55</sup>

The fundamental nature of bread meant that throughout the medieval period legislation was issued and re-issued to regulate its sale. From 1297 it was subject to national regulation, the Assize of Bread, which was expanded in later legislation.<sup>56</sup> This national legislation had to be implemented on a local level and throughout the medieval period there is evidence in both London and York of the Assize being enforced. The York Civic Ordinances of 1301 state that the Assize of Bread and Ale was to be maintained, and that each baker was to have his own sign for marking his bread and a bolting cloth appropriate for wastel, simnel, demesne, and cocket bread.<sup>57</sup> Through the

---

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 218, ll. 264-71.

<sup>55</sup> The Assize of Bread regulated bread sold for a farthing, but obviously bakers at this time were habitually making only the larger half-penny and penny loaves. The same mayoral ordinance also demanded that ale should also be sold by a farthing measure to assist the poor, with new farthing measures being made and sealed with the letter F: *CLBH*, p. 183. That the sale of bread was perceived to be of particular significance is evidence by the fact that in the later Middle Ages a register of offences against the Assize of Bread was compiled. This folio volume of 164 leaves charts offences from 1292-1438, extracts of which are published in H. T. Riley (ed.), *Munimenta Gildhallae Londoniensis* (London, 1862), 3: 411-29.

<sup>56</sup> This legislation varied the weights of different kinds of bread sold for a farthing, half a penny, and a penny, according to the price of corn (i.e. the higher the cost of corn the smaller the loaves). The price of corn was fixed by local magistrates after the Feast of St Michael, and, once fixed, it was proclaimed and utilised to calculate the weight bread. This could be adjusted during the year if there were an appreciable change in the price of corn: A. C. Ross, 'The Assize of Bread', *Economic History Review*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Series 9 (1956): 332-42. The *Liber albus* records the Assize of Bread for London, noting that each year four men were chosen and sent to buy three quarters of corn, one at the Pavement in Cheap, one at Gracechurch or at Billingsgate, and the third at Queen-Hythe. From this corn they made wastel bread, light bread, and brown bread, and presented them whilst still hot to the mayor and aldermen at the Guildhall. There then follows calculations involving the price of the corn, an allowance for expenses, and the price for which the bran was to be sold. Following this are guidelines as to how the weight of the bread should be adjusted according to fluctuations in the price of corn during the year: H. T. Riley (ed. and trans.), *Liber albus: The White Book of the City of London* (London, 1861), pp. 302-5; Riley (ed.), *Munimenta Gildhallae Londoniensis*, 1: 349-53.

<sup>57</sup> For an explanation of the different types of medieval bread see Ross, 'Assize of Bread', pp. 333-34.



use of a personalised sign all the bread made by any baker was immediately identifiable. Although the primary purpose of the seals was to identify the producers of defective bread, no doubt the authorities also hoped that the use of seals would evoke in individual bakers a sense of responsibility for the bread that they produced. Each kind of bread was to be weighed once a week, and if the bread was found to be underweight the baker was to be heavily fined, and if greatly underweight he was to be put in the pillory and thenceforth his bread marked twice with his sign. If the baker repeatedly broke the Assize his oven was to be destroyed and he was to be forced to abjure the trade of baking forever.<sup>58</sup>

Throughout the medieval period bakers were accused of and condemned for breaking the Assize. The following are just a few examples of the offences committed. In York in 1304 twenty-four bakers of white bread and twelve bakers of black bread were accused of offending against these ordinances.<sup>59</sup> Similarly, in York in 1468-69 and 1475-76 several bakers were found guilty of selling underweight bread.<sup>60</sup> In London in 1310 the bread taken from a number of bakeresses was found to be underweight, but as the bread had been weighed while cold they were not punished.<sup>61</sup> In London in 1316 the bread of Gilbert Pany was found to be underweight for a third time, which resulted in him being condemned to be drawn on the hurdle and then made to forswear the trade of baker in the city forever.<sup>62</sup> In 1387 Robert Porter, a baker's servant, alarmed by the presence of the mayor in Cheap making Assay of the bread, inserted a piece of iron into a penny loaf to make it weigh more. Robert was punished by being taken to the Cornhill and set in the pillory there for one hour with the offending loaf and piece of iron hung around his neck.<sup>63</sup> The authorities were equally unforgiving to those who attempted to defraud neighbours and guests. In 1327, when bakers used specially adapted moulding-

---

<sup>58</sup> M. Prestwich (ed.), *York Civic Ordinances, 1301*, Borthwick Papers 49 (York, 1976), pp. 10-11.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 22.

<sup>60</sup> R. B. Dobson (ed.), *York City Chamberlains' Account Rolls 1396-1500*, Surtees Society 192 (1978-79), pp. 121, 144-45.

<sup>61</sup> H. T. Riley (ed.), *Memorials of London and London Life in the XIIIth, XIVth, and XVth Centuries* (London, 1868), pp. 71-72; *CLBD*, p. 311. The *Liber albus* records that bread should be taken for the Assay while hot and not when cold: Riley (ed.), *Liber albus*, p. 310; Riley (ed.), *Munimenta Gildhallae Londoniensis*, 1: 538.

<sup>62</sup> Riley (ed.), *Memorials*, pp. 122-23; *CLBD*, p. 311. The *Liber albus* suggests an offending baker should be punished on the first offence by being drawn on a hurdle from the Guildhall to his house through the busiest and dirtiest streets, with the loaf hanging around his neck; on the second occasion by being drawn on a hurdle from the Guildhall, through the great street of Cheap, to the pillory, there to remain for at least one hour; on the third occasion by being drawn on a hurdle, his oven pulled down and being made to forswear the trade within the City forever: Riley (ed.), *Liber albus*, p. 232; Riley (ed.), *Munimenta Gildhallae Londoniensis*, 1: 266.

<sup>63</sup> Riley (ed.), *Memorials*, p. 498; *CLBH*, pp. 322-23.



boards designed to cheat their neighbours who had brought in their own dough to be baked into bread, the guilty bakers were sentenced to stand in the pillory with the dough hung around their necks.<sup>64</sup> Owing to the danger of fraud, inn-keepers in York and London were forbidden to bake their own bread or horse bread for fear that it might not be made according to the Assize.<sup>65</sup> For a similar reason, hucksters were not to bake their own bread for sale, but were to get it from the common bakers.<sup>66</sup> As the price of bread might also be raised when it passed from the bakers to regrators or hucksters, legislation was issued to define the hucksters' profit-margins.<sup>67</sup>

Issues of quality were carefully observed by city officials, with bakers being appointed to supervise the baking of bread in the city.<sup>68</sup> In order to facilitate quality control bakers were not allowed to bake both high quality white bread and *tourte* bread (a coarse brown bread).<sup>69</sup> In addition, there were rules governing how the flour was to be sieved, how the dough was to be kneaded, the quality of the water to be used, and the quality of the meal.<sup>70</sup> In 1432 complaints were made that bakers were sending wheat mixed with barley to be milled outside London, where it could not be examined, and then making bread of the mixed flour, passing it off as pure wheat bread.<sup>71</sup> In general, those bakers found contravening quality controls were severely punished. For example,

---

<sup>64</sup> Riley (ed.), *Memorials*, pp. 162-65.

<sup>65</sup> Riley (ed.), *Memorials*, p. 323; *CLBG* p. 174; *CLBH*, p. 3. *YMB*, 1:169. See also, *YHB*, 1: 261.

<sup>66</sup> Riley (ed.), *Memorials* p. 324. Hucksters were petty traders, usually women, who re-sold commodities that they had bought from the producers. In York hucksters were accused of selling bread brought into the city from outside before the searchers had a chance to examine it. As a consequence it was ordained that no bread could be sold in the Thursday Market before seven o'clock was struck, so that there might be time to examine it: *YMB*, 1: 171-72. Similarly, London legislation forbade bakers and regrators to buy bread made outside London until it had been examined, due to the risk that it might be '*adulterinum*': Riley, *Liber albus*, pp. 309-10.

<sup>67</sup> Bakers were to give hucksters thirteen articles of bread for twelve: Riley (ed.), *Liber albus*, p. 232; *CLBH*, pp. 107, 194; *CLBL*, p. 170. From reading repeated legislation from London and York which complains of the misdemeanours of hucksters and regrators it is tempting to see such figures in a purely negative light. It should be remembered, however, that hucksters played a vital role in food distribution in the city, taking it from its place of production through the streets where it was purchased by the populace. This role as food distributors is acknowledged in legislation which commands hucksters to walk through the streets rather than selling from one spot. See, for example, *CLBG*, p. 123; *CLBH*, pp. 243-44. Not all hucksters were mobile sellers. For example, in York Agnes, a 'bredeseller', paid 8*d.* for a market stall in 1462-63; Elena Cotes, a tapster, paid 10*d.* for a market stall in 1475-76; and Agnes Alan a 'bredeseller' paid 4*d.* for a market stall in 1475-76: Dobson (ed.), *York City Chamberlains Account Rolls*, pp. 105, 147.

<sup>68</sup> Such as John Groos who was appointed as the supervisor of bakers in 1378: *CLBH*, p. 108. The London bakers also held their own courts, known as Hallemotes, four times a year, which all bakers were supposed to attend. These Hallemotes were a useful opportunity to reiterate statutes to proclaim the Assize: Riley (ed.), *Liber albus*, pp. 310-11. This information is in fact taken by Riley from the *Liber custumarum* rather than the *Liber albus*: Riley (ed.), *Munimenta Gildhallae Londoniensis*, 2, i: 104.

<sup>69</sup> Riley (ed.), *Liber albus*, pp. 231 and 310; Riley (ed.), *Munimenta Gildhallae Londoniensis*, 1: 265 and 358; *CLBH*, p. 107.

<sup>70</sup> *CLBH*, pp. 106-7; *CLBK*, p. 85; Prestwich (ed.), *York Civic Ordinances*, pp. 10-11.

<sup>71</sup> *CLBK*, p. 146.



in 1316 two bakers convicted of making their bread of rotten materials were punished with the pillory.<sup>72</sup> In 1437, a baker, was sentenced to be drawn on the hurdle for selling *tourte* bread made from bad wheat and dough.<sup>73</sup> In 1383 a baker and his servant were prosecuted for selling bread, which when broken was found to be composed of ashes, earth, and other filth.<sup>74</sup> In order that bakers might not disguise the nature of the bread that they sold, London officials forbade bakers to cover their bread with bran.<sup>75</sup> Hence, it is possible to see that by attempting to control the quality of bread and prohibiting the purchase of bread from sources other than registered bakers, the civic authorities were attempting to promote an association between the civic-sanctioned seal and good-quality bread.

Like bread, the price of ale was controlled by the Assize and linked to the price of grain.<sup>76</sup> In London the aldermen were responsible for ensuring that the Assize of Ale was kept in their ward. This they achieved by appointing 'aleconners', testers of ale, who were required to appear with their findings at the Great Court of Wardmote.<sup>77</sup> Each aleconner had to take an oath, in which he swore to perform fully and honestly the duties of his office.<sup>78</sup> He would thus have felt a personal responsibility to ensure that good quality ale was sold in legal measure for a fair price in his own ward. As with the bakers, a brewer's product was marked with an identifying seal, the use of which was restricted by the aldermen of the ward.<sup>79</sup> It would be a mistake, however, to assume that

---

<sup>72</sup> Riley (ed.), *Memorials*, p. 121.

<sup>73</sup> Riley (ed.), *Munimenta Gildhallae Londoniensis*, 3: 429.

<sup>74</sup> Although the baker claimed that these loaves were used in the baking process to ensure even distribution of heat, and had been sold in error, both he and his servant were found guilty. The baker was fined and drawn on a hurdle, his servant was put in the pillory and the defective loaves burned beneath him: Riley (ed.), *Munimenta Gildhallae Londoniensis*, 3: 426-28.

<sup>75</sup> Riley (ed.), *Liber albus*, p. 308; Riley (ed.), *Munimenta Gildhallae Londoniensis*, 1: 356. In 1316 a baker was sentenced to the pillory for baking bread that was found to contain bad dough within and good dough without: Riley (ed.), *Memorials*, p. 120.

<sup>76</sup> See, for example, Riley (ed.), *Liber albus*, pp. 311-12; Riley (ed.), *Munimenta Gildhallae Londoniensis*, 1: 358-59; Prestwich (ed.), *York Civic Ordinances*, pp. 10-11.

<sup>77</sup> *CLBH*, pp. 71, 157, 349, 360-61. For a detailed discussion of the ale trade in medieval England see J. M. Bennett, *Ale, Beer, and Brewsters in England: Women's Work in a Changing World, 1300-1600* (Oxford, 1996).

<sup>78</sup> This oath is laid out in Riley (ed.), *Liber albus*, p. 274. Brewers were to sell ale only by gallon, potel, quart, or gill measure of good and lawful assize: *CLBH*, p. 201.

<sup>79</sup> *CLBG*, p. 4. Just such a seal, bearing an impression of a tun and his name, was lost by the London taverer, Richard de Refham: Riley (ed.), *Memorials*, p. 45. In York all legitimate measures were marked with a puncheon of the livery of the mayor and chamberlains: *YMB*, 1: 15. To avoid the selling of ale by false measures, no brewer was allowed to sell ale to hucksters for resale: Riley (ed.), *Liber albus*, p. 313; Riley (ed.), *Munimenta Gildhallae Londoniensis*, 1: 360. Hucksters avoided this legislation, however, by moving outside the city's Liberties to Southwark and Westminster. This became such a problem that by the end of the fourteenth century officers had to be appointed to prevent the conveyance of ale out of the city to hucksters: M. Carlin, *Medieval Southwark* (London, 1996), p. 203; *CLBH*, p. 215.



attempts by the government to encourage consumer confidence were met with unequivocal enthusiasm by producers. Although the civic authorities might have hoped thus to encourage a sense of responsibility for the ale they produced, in fact the brewers regarded legislation regulating their practices as intrusive, and tended to react by refusing to brew.<sup>80</sup> The *Liber albus* records in an ordinance regarding the sale of ale, that all brewers should follow their trade as normal, brewing as much ale as they were accustomed. Any brewer found unwilling to brew or brewing less than they were wont to do was to be held a withholder of victuals from the city and for such disobedience and malice to incur the punishment of imprisonment.<sup>81</sup> This was obviously quite a real threat. In 1375 two brewers were imprisoned for declaring publicly that they would not keep to the regulations regarding the sale of ale and refusing to brew any more ale; they also incited other brewers to do the same.<sup>82</sup>

The price and measure of wine was likewise regulated.<sup>83</sup> The cost of wine was among those regulated by the ordinance of prices and wages in London following the Black Death.<sup>84</sup> This legislation also stated that wine was to be sold in measures sealed with the seal of the alderman of the ward, and that the vessel into which the wine was drawn was to be clean.<sup>85</sup> These rules were reiterated and elaborated in later ordinances. For example, in 1370 the vintners agreed that the designated searchers could make search for unsound wine; that new wine was not to be kept alongside old; that Rhenish wine should not be kept amongst wine from any other country; that all wine should be sold by sealed measures; that the door of cellars should be kept unobstructed so that a customer would be able to see the wine being drawn; and that four men of the trade should be appointed to oversee the quality of wines and deal with any other unforeseen defaults during each year.<sup>86</sup> In 1419 additional regulations were issued concerning the adulteration of wine, forbidding the mixing of wine from different origins, old with new.

---

<sup>80</sup> Resistance to government legislation is not surprising as it usually served to delimit profit margins. It is also perhaps inevitable that an expert in any victualling trade would resent outside interference. That brewers were perceived as routinely contravening legislation is evidenced by a tale in which an honest brewster's house is miraculously saved from fire because she used honest weights and measures: M. M. Banks (ed.), *An Alphabet of Tales*, EETS, OS 126, 126 (1904-5), p. 330.

<sup>81</sup> Riley (ed.), *Liber albus*, p. 311; Riley (ed.), *Munimenta Gildhallae Londoniensis*, 1: 359.

<sup>82</sup> *CPMR*, 1364-81, pp. 210-211.

<sup>83</sup> In York the sale price of wine was calculated according to its cost on arrival at the port of Kingston-Upon-Humber: *YHB*, 1: 83. In London it was calculated from the wholesale price of wine after the arrival of three or four ships from Gascony: Riley (ed.), *Memorials*, p. 342; *CLBG*, p. 259.

<sup>84</sup> No vintner was to sell a gallon of wine of Vernage for more than 2s., and wine of Crete, wine of the River, Piemont, Clare, and Malveisin at more than 16d.: Riley (ed.), *Memorials*, p. 255. *CLBF*, p. 212.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>86</sup> Riley (ed.), *Memorials*, pp. 341-43; *CLBG*, p. 259.



good with bad, or the addition of cobbler's wax, pitch, or 'othir horrible and unholosome pinges' to resuscitate wine.<sup>87</sup> In the same year William Horold was condemned to the pillory for adding 'diuers gummes and unholosome oþer thynges for mannys body' to 'old and feble Spaynissh wyn' in order to pass it off as 'good and trewe Romeney'.<sup>88</sup>

In fact, all the victualling trades were highly regulated regarding the quality of the produce they sold and its prices.<sup>89</sup> Prices were kept down by constant legislation against forestalling.<sup>90</sup> Wardens were appointed to oversee each of the victualling trades and to report to the civic government any defaults and misdemeanours. When a victualler was accused of breaking his trade ordinances a group of expert jurors was assembled to judge the case. For example, in 1374 a jury of cooks was appointed to decide whether certain butchers had sold meat unfit for human consumption.<sup>91</sup> Likewise, in 1381 a jury of cooks were called to decide whether the pigeons sold by an Oxford poulterer in Fleet Street were rotten.<sup>92</sup> In general, civic administration seems to have attempted to make the sale of victuals in the city as transparent as possible to avoid the customer being in any way defrauded. Undoubtedly, the ordinances of 1378 demanding that butchers in London should shut their shops while it was still light, so that meat would only be sold by clear daylight rather than candlelight, was intended to prevent bad quality and defective meat from being sold to customers.<sup>93</sup>

Additionally, efforts were made by the civic authorities to ensure that outside traders would not be put off selling their wares in London through fear of being defrauded. It was in the city's interest to have traders come in from outside as it helped reduce the risk of the establishment of monopolies on the one hand and ensured variety

---

<sup>87</sup> Riley (ed.), *Memorials*, pp. 670-72; *CLBI*, p. 214.

<sup>88</sup> Riley (ed.), *Memorials*, p. 672; *CLBI*, p. 214.

<sup>89</sup> For accounts of the regulations and practices of two such victualling trades see P. E. Jones, *The Butchers of London: A History of the Worshipful Company of Butchers of the City of London* (London, 1976); and P. E. Jones, *The Worshipful Company of Poulters of the City of London: A Short History* (London, 1965). Good general surveys of the victualling trades are to be found in the chapter on 'The London Food Markets' in I. Archer, C. Barron, and V. Harding (eds.), *Hugh Alley's Caveat: The Markets of London in 1598. Folger MS V. a. 318*, London Topographical Society Publication 137 (1988), pp. 1-15; C. Barron, 'The Later Middle Ages: 1270-1520', in M. D. Lobel (ed.), *The British Atlas of Historic Towns. Volume III: The City of London from Prehistoric Times to c. 1520* (1989; repr. Oxford, 1991), pp. 42-56; A. Rycraft, 'Can We Tell What People Ate in Late Medieval York?', in E. White (ed.), *Feeding a City: York. The Provision of Food from Roman Times to the Beginning of the Twentieth Century* (Totnes, 2000), pp. 61-78.

<sup>90</sup> See, for example, *CLBG*, pp. 122, 149, 266, 271; *CLBH*, pp. 13, 134. For a full description and history of forestalling in the Middle Ages see R. H. Britnell, 'Forstall, Forestalling and the Statute of Forestallers', *English Historical Review* 102 (1987): 89-102.

<sup>91</sup> *CLBG*, pp. 332-33.

<sup>92</sup> Riley (ed.), *Memorials*, pp. 448-49; *CLBH*, p. 165.

<sup>93</sup> Riley (ed.), *Memorials*, p. 426; *CLBH*, p. 108.



and plenty on the other. The *Liber albus* contains a illustrative tale of how country-folk coming into the city to sell corn might lose money. The tale describes how the foreign corn-dealer, on the payment of a deposit by the buyer, takes the whole of his corn to the house of the buyer, where he finds, for various reasons, that he is unable to receive his full payment. When the seller again returns to claim payment it is refused, and if the seller makes to remove his corn he finds it wetted for the purpose of making malt and, therefore, is unable to remove it because it is in another state than when he sold it. As the text explains, in such a manner the poor man loses half his pay in expenses before his bill is settled.<sup>94</sup> Through the use of such a tale not only is the punishment for such treatment of a foreign corn-dealer prescribed, but such fraudulent activity is further discouraged by eliciting a degree of understanding for the plight of the victim. Moreover, the implication is, that should such behaviour be allowed to become prevalent, then foreign traders would no longer come to sell their goods in the city, to the general loss of the people. Thus, the suggestion is that all had a vested interest in ensuring that foreign traders were treated fairly.

In order to assist the regulation of the victualling industry, and in particular the activities of foreign traders, the city was divided not only temporally, but also geographically, according to trade and to whether the traders were citizens or foreigners.<sup>95</sup> The first problem facing the authorities was to ensure that victuals were sold in the open market rather than secretly in inns or other houses, which was often a problem with foreign traders bringing victuals into the city. In 1380 in York, complaints were made regarding the secret sale of wine by agreement rather than open sale, which resulted in a demand that all wine be sold openly.<sup>96</sup> In 1389 regulations regarding the sale of poultry in the Thursday Market stated that foreign poulterers bringing poultry into the city should come openly with their victuals to the Thursday market and sell them there and not in their houses or the houses of others.<sup>97</sup> Likewise, the fishmongers' ordinances stated that 'no straunger...that brynges...any maner of vitail that pertiens to fysshmanger crafte, howse none no selle none bot in the commune market'.<sup>98</sup> Fish was

---

<sup>94</sup> Riley (ed.), *Liber albus*, pp. 229-30; Riley (ed.), *Munimenta Gildhallae Londoniensis*, 1: 261-62.

<sup>95</sup> The times at which cooks, regrators, and merchants were allowed to purchase victuals were prescribed so that the common people would have a chance to buy victuals for their own needs first. The 1350 regulations regarding wages and prices are careful to point out that food brought into London was primarily for the support and sustenance of London households: Riley (ed.), *Memorials*, p. 255-56.

<sup>96</sup> *YMB*, 1: 39-40.

<sup>97</sup> *YMB*, 1: 45-46.

<sup>98</sup> *YMB*, 1: 222.



sold in York in two markets, Foss Bridge and on Ouse Bridge. Foreign fishmongers were restricted to selling fish on Ouse Bridge.<sup>99</sup>

In London similar sorts of legislation were repeatedly passed.<sup>100</sup> The city was also precisely divided into areas where foreign and free citizens might sell their produce. Take, for example, the case of the poulterers. In 1345 a proclamation was made regarding the sale of poultry in the Leadenhall. Whereas foreign poulterers were accused of previously having sold poultry at extortionate prices in secret in lanes and inns in the city, they were thenceforth to sell their poultry in the Leadenhall and nowhere else. Residents of the city wishing to sell poultry were not to sell in the Leadenhall, but in the Poultry as of old.<sup>101</sup> Later in the same year it was added that citizen poulterers were not to sell poultry on the east side of the 'Tun' on Cornhill.<sup>102</sup> In 1357, it was reiterated that foreign poulterers were to sell their poultry in the Leadenhall, without interference from citizen poulterers, who were to sell from their own houses or against the wall towards the west of the Church of St Michael on Cornhill.<sup>103</sup> In 1375, this was again reiterated, with foreign poulterers entering the city by Newgate and Aldersgate being told to sell their poultry on the Pavement before the Friars Minor.<sup>104</sup> Thus, foreign poulterers were to be located in an easily observable and searchable place to do their business, where they could not be confused with citizen poulterers and were not able to forestall their poultry to citizen poulterers.

### **The Display of Punishment**

From this brief examination of civic food legislation, it can clearly be seen that worries, such as those expressed in *Wynnere and Wastoure*, regarding being defrauded in the cities found their answer in civic food regulations. Indeed, the tale in the *Liber albus* about the country-folk bringing corn in for sale in the city could be seen as replying directly to some of the fears expressed by *Wynnere and Wastoure* regarding the unsophisticated rural-dweller being defrauded in the big city. Granted, the repetition of legislation may be indicative of recurrent problems, but quite obviously civic officials took seriously their duties to regulate the victualling industry. Moreover, the nature of food legislation implies that the civic authorities were attempting to indoctrinate

---

<sup>99</sup> *YMB*, 1: 198.

<sup>100</sup> See, for example, *CLBH*, pp. 53, 222-23, 242, 447.

<sup>101</sup> Riley (ed.), *Memorials*, p. 220-21; *CLBF*, p. 123.

<sup>102</sup> Riley (ed.), *Memorials*, p. 221; *CLBF*, p. 123.

<sup>103</sup> Riley (ed.), *Memorials*, 299-300; *CLBG*, p. 102.

<sup>104</sup> Riley (ed.), *Memorials*, p. 389; *CLBH*, p. 3.



victuallers with a pride in both their own products and also the flourishing condition of the city markets (although the victuallers themselves showed, on occasion, some resistance to this). In fact, food legislation was a matter of such significant concern that it could become a political issue, as was the case in the fight for the position of mayor which occurred between Nicholas Brembre and John of Northampton in the 1380s, which is often referred to as a fight between the victuallers and non-victuallers.<sup>105</sup> The source of this dispute was that for a long time the citizen fishmongers had held a monopoly over trade in fish in London, and it was part of the agenda of the John of Northampton, who became Mayor in 1381, to break up that monopoly, which he did by issuing legislation regarding the free sale of fish by foreign fishmongers.<sup>106</sup> This legislation met with resistance from the citizen fishmongers and also the former mayor, Brembre, who was a grocer.<sup>107</sup> What is significant, however, is that support for Northampton was sufficiently great to cause his defeat of the powerful Brembre in the 1382 mayoral elections; Northampton managed to attract the support not only of Richard II but also that of a large proportion of the London populace, which has been attributed to the fact that profiteering in food was viewed as being the most unpardonable of crimes.<sup>108</sup> In other words, concerns regarding civic food provisioning were great enough to make and break political careers.

As the regulation of food provision was regarded so seriously, it is unsurprising that those officials who neglected or abused their duties were harshly punished. For example, in London in 1384-85 when John Groos and Reginald atte Sele, masters and surveyors of the Mistery of Bakers, and John Whitlock, a city official, were found guilty of having accepted a bribe of 20s. to turn a blind eye to underweight bread, they were imprisoned for half a year, fined, and were forbidden ever to serve in official positions again.<sup>109</sup> Those who impersonated officials charged with regulating the sale of victuals were also condemned. When William Felde (1376) pretended to have been appointed by

---

<sup>105</sup> C. M. Barron, 'London, 1300-1540', in D. M. Palliser (ed.), *The Cambridge Urban History of Britain: Volume I. 600-1540* (Cambridge, 2000), p. 403.

<sup>106</sup> R. Bird, *The Turbulent London of Richard II* (London, 1949), pp. 63, 77-78. This legislation was reiterated in 1383: 'alle swiche vitailers foreins that bryngeth fissh or other vitailles to the same citee to selle, mowe come and selle hire forseid fische and vitailles...frelliche with oute destourbaunce or lettyng of eny man in priue or apiert': Riley (ed.), *Memorials*, p. 481.

<sup>107</sup> See, for example, *CPMR, 1381-1412*, p. 21; Riley (ed.), *Memorials*, pp. 468-70; *CLBH*, p. 197.

<sup>108</sup> Bird, *Turbulent London*, p. 79. Northampton's defeat in the mayoral elections of the following year, when Richard II decided to favour Bembre instead, is attributed to his having turned from attacking the fishmongers specifically to the attack of the capitalist practices of the craft guild in general; L. C. Hector and B. F. Harvey (ed. and trans.), *The Westminster Chronicle 1381-1394* (Oxford, 1982), pp. 60-61.

<sup>109</sup> *CLBH*, pp. 260-61.



the mayor to confiscate ale found in the houses of hucksters, and accepted bribes from hucksters to allow them to keep their ale, he was punished by being set in the pillory.<sup>110</sup> A dim view was also taken of those who impersonated the King's servants charged with taking food for the royal household. John Harehulle (1394), who pretended to be a taker of ale for the King, was punished by being set in the pillory for fraudulently obtaining gifts from city brewers.<sup>111</sup> Likewise, William Redehede, who pretended to be the taker and purveyor of grain for the King, was condemned for fraudulently attempting to remove four bushels of wheat from Gracechurch Market. What is striking about this description is its similarity to the tale in the *Liber albus*. William's crime was perceived to be not only the damage to the commonalty, but also to the market itself. It was noted that poor people hardly dare come into the city to sell their wares for fear of the multitude of pretended purveyors and takers. A thriving and prosperous market was a prime concern for the civic authorities, and, just like an individual, it was subject to damage as the result of corrupt practices. Consequently, William's punishment was correspondingly public. For three market-days he was taken from Newgate Prison to the Cornmarket opposite the Friars Minors, where the judgement was read out. He was taken from there through the middle of the high street of Cheap to the pillory on Cornhill, in which he was placed for one hour on each of the three days, while the reason for his presence was publicly proclaimed.<sup>112</sup>

This generally public, and often theatrical, nature of punishment for offending against victualling legislation is highly significant. Very few victualling offences were punished merely by a fine; it was more common for there to be some public display of punishment.<sup>113</sup> The confiscation of fishing nets was usually followed by burning them in Cheap.<sup>114</sup> Similarly, containers for fish which were of false measure were publicly burned in the street.<sup>115</sup> This extended to a preference for the public punishment of criminals themselves. In 1297 a writ from Edward I prescribed chastising offending

---

<sup>110</sup> *CLBH*, pp. 18-19.

<sup>111</sup> Riley (ed.), *Memorials*, p. 536; *CLBH*, p. 411.

<sup>112</sup> Riley (ed.), *Memorials*, pp. 645-46; *CLBI*, p. 174.

<sup>113</sup> This attitude does not seem to have been confined to England. In southern France in the 1350s a spicer was found guilty of selling impure saffron, which was subsequently publicly burned. The accusations against him are recorded in the court records in unambiguous terms: he is described as the son of iniquity and evil, spurred on by the devil. The court decreed that if his acts were to go unpublished they would encourage bad practices in others: K. L. Reyerson, 'Commercial Fraud in the Middle Ages: The Case of the Dissembling Pepperer', *Journal of Medieval History* 8 (1982): 65.

<sup>114</sup> See, for example, *CLBH*, pp. 86, 154-55, 275, 277-78, 285, 426-27.

<sup>115</sup> *CLBH*, pp. 194-96.



brewers and bakers with public corporal punishment.<sup>116</sup> This sentiment was reiterated in the *Liber albus*.<sup>117</sup> Indeed, Lydgate's poem 'Against Millers and Bakers' refers to the pillory as the 'trewe herytage' of false bakers, describing with great delight the joy of hurling 'eggys' at the captive felon.<sup>118</sup> He even goes so far as to suggest that as bakers and millers spend so much time in the pillory they should make their 'fraternite' at its base and 'Vndir the pillory a litil chapell bylde'.<sup>119</sup> Bakers and millers were not the only recipients of such public punishment. In 1374 several butchers found guilty of selling meat unfit for human consumption were condemned to stand in the pillory while the meat was burnt underneath them.<sup>120</sup> Likewise, In 1370 a poulterer found guilty of selling game birds unfit for human consumption was condemned to the pillory while the birds were burned beneath him.<sup>121</sup> In 1364, a man found guilty of selling unsound wine was initially sentenced to prison. This sentence was subsequently altered and instead the man had to drink publicly a draught of the corrupt wine, while the remainder was poured over his head. He was then forced to forswear the vintners' trade.<sup>122</sup> In 1364 Alice Caustone, who was found guilty of thickening the bottom of a quart measure with pitch covered with rosemary, was sentenced to the 'thewe', the pillory for women. The false quart measure was divided in half, one of which accompanied Alice to the 'thewe', the other remained in the Chamber of the Guildhall, no doubt reminding its officials of their role in legislating victual sales and serving as a salutatory warning to visiting victuallers.<sup>123</sup> The civic authorities, however, were not always granted their display of punishment. In 1382, Reynald atte Chaumbre was found guilty by a jury of cooks and fishmongers of selling rotten fish and sentenced to be set in the pillory on six market

---

<sup>116</sup> Riley (ed.), *Memorials*, pp. 36-37; *CLBB* p. 217.

<sup>117</sup> Riley (ed.), *Liber albus*, p. 232; Riley (ed.), *Munimenta Gildhallae Londoniensis*, 1: 265. The section on the Assize of Bread contains an illustration of a baker being drawn on a hurdle with a defective loaf tied around his neck and depictions of pillories. These illustrations are reproduced on the page facing the title page in Riley (ed.), *Munimenta Gildhallae Londoniensis*, 3.

<sup>118</sup> John Lydgate, *The Minor Poems of John Lydgate. Part II: The Secular Poems*, ed. H. N. MacCracken, EETS, OS 192 (1934; repr. 1961), p. 448, ll. 10 and 3.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 448-49, ll. 18-19.

<sup>120</sup> *CLBG*, pp. 332-33.

<sup>121</sup> *CLBG*, p. 259. On occasion punishment could take on a theatrical nature. In 1517, John Pynkard, found guilty of selling four flitches of stinking bacon, was condemned to ride from Newgate prison to Leadenhall horse with two of the flitches of bacon fastened upon him and the other two carried before him, while striking a basin to attract attention and bearing a paper on his head reading 'For puttyng to sale of mesell and stynkyng bacon'. Similarly, John Clerk, found guilty of selling rotten pork, was set upon a scaffold in the Leadenhall on Saturday and Sunday from 9 to 11 am with hogs' ears and other pieces of sows hanging from his shoulders. By the mid-sixteenth century the offender was usually ordered to ride through the market places on horseback, facing the horse's tail, with the corrupt meat hanging around his neck: Jones, *The Butchers of London*, pp. 132-33.

<sup>122</sup> Riley (ed.), *Memorials*, p. 318-19; *CLBG*, p. 178.

<sup>123</sup> Riley (ed.), *Memorials*, p. 319; *CLBG*, p. 175.



days for one hour while some of the fish were burnt beneath him. It transpired, however, that Reynald was an officer of the King and he was therefore excused the pillory.<sup>124</sup>

The overall suggestion would seem to be that not only were civic officials concerned to issue legislation regarding the victualling industry and ensure that such legislation was implemented, but they wanted their actions to be public knowledge. As James Masschaele points out, these punishments were not ‘intended to be physically painful; their utility as forms of chastisement was predicated on the shame offenders felt at being exposed in a powerless posture, a shame that was designed to be both punitive for the individual transgressor and admonitory for society at large’.<sup>125</sup> More importantly, those who offended against the victuallers’ ordinances were not only punished, they were punished in the places in which they traded, in front of their customers, while the precise nature of their offences was made known to those who might purchase goods from them on the very next day.<sup>126</sup> It would appear that it was not enough for justice to be done; it had to be seen to be done by as many people as possible. It was clearly of primary concern to the civic authorities that they should be seen to be strictly regulating the victualling trade.

I opened this chapter with the contention that, in order for there to be a peaceful city the basic bodily needs of the inhabitants, in terms of food, drink and clothing, must be met, and that it should be possible to isolate an ideology encompassing civic attitudes towards necessity within civic food legislation. Does the legislation examined here, though, really reflect an ideology based on the provision of bodily needs? Certainly civic concerns can be observed regarding the feeding of the poorer members of society in, for example, some of the legislation surrounding bread. Yet even legislation surrounding this basic food goes beyond ideas of bodily necessity in restrictions concerning expensive, high-quality bread. In fact, what is observable is not so much a civic concern with necessity but rather with ideas of plenty. Although legislation may take ideas of necessity as its basic premise, these ideas soon slide into concerns of plenty. A concrete example of this slippage is observable in the construction of the Leadenhall grain garner

---

<sup>124</sup> Riley (ed.), *Memorials*, pp. 471-72; *CLBH*, p. 197

<sup>125</sup> J. Masschaele, ‘The Public Space of the Marketplace in Medieval England’, *Speculum* 77 (2002): 400. He notes that although devices such as the pillory and ‘thewe’ were prescribed for a number of crimes and misdemeanours they were most commonly associated with offences related to trade in foodstuffs, particularly infractions against the Assize of Bread: *ibid.*, p. 401.

<sup>126</sup> Certainly the shame and damage to trade seems to have been recognised by those condemned to public punishment. In 1365 it is claimed that the mayor of London had accepted a bribe in order to put Rose Whytchurch, who had been found guilty of selling ale contrary to regulations, in the ‘thewe’ during the night instead of the day: *CPMR, 1364-1381*, p. 15.



and market, which began in 1440 and was largely financed by the wealthy draper and future mayor, Simon Eyre.<sup>127</sup> The original purpose of this new building was to enable the city to control its grain stocks, to prevent shortages such as had occurred earlier in the fifteenth century, and to keep the victuallers dry in wet weather in order to encourage them to sell their victuals regularly in the city.<sup>128</sup> At the heart of the intentions surrounding this construction, therefore, were ideas of necessity, of ensuring the city was supplied with enough food. After the death of Simon Eyre, however, his intention of giving over large areas of valuable warehouse space for the common good were soon rejected as his successors allowed the space to be rented out for the storage of expensive imported goods.<sup>129</sup> Thus, a building which was begun with concerns about civic necessity soon came to be associated with luxury and plenty.<sup>130</sup>

Although, as suggested by Langland, the provision of bodily necessities is that thing which ensures peace and productivity, I would suggest that the city's primary concern was the construction of an idea of the city as a place of plenty. Thus, much legislation which might at first appear to be about necessity is in fact about plenty. Take, for example the case of the city cooks, who, Martha Carlin has argued, were intimately concerned with the provision of hot food for the very poorest members of society. In her recent study of the role of cooks in London society she concludes that the main role of the London cooks was to supply hot food to the urban poor, who had no other means of acquiring it.<sup>131</sup> Certainly, a piece of legislation concerning the Great Conduit in 1345 might suggest that the poor were not expected to cook; the brewers were instructed not to waste water from the Great Conduit, as it had been built so that the rich and middling

---

<sup>127</sup> See M. Samuel, 'The Fifteenth-Century Garner at Leadenhall, London', *Antiquaries Journal* 69 (1989): 119-53; M. Samuel and G. Milne, 'The "Ledene Hall" and Medieval Market: Medieval and Modern Leadenhall 1195-1990', in Gustav Milne (ed.), *From Roman Basilica to Medieval Market: Archaeology in Action in the City of London* (London, 1992), pp. 39-50.

<sup>128</sup> Samuel, 'The Fifteenth-Century Garner', p. 147.

<sup>129</sup> Samuel, 'The Fifteenth-Century Garner', pp. 149-50; Samuel and Milne, 'The "Ledene Hall"', pp. 45-46.

<sup>130</sup> A similar move from necessity to plenty can be observed in the Leadenhall chapel, the building of which Eyre also financed. This chapel was intended for the spiritual edification of the souls of the market people, but even this wish of Eyre's did not come to fulfilment as his executors failed to administer both his school and chapel, despite his having left 3,000 marks in his will for that very purpose. One is left with a sense that this grand chapel was used rather to display the power of the civic dignitaries than to cater for the spiritual necessities of the populace: Samuel, 'The Fifteenth-Century Garner', pp. 138-41, 47; Samuel and Milne, 'The "Ledene Hall"', pp. 43-45. A useful comparison is the medieval Florentine grain garner and chapel of Orsanmichele. See N. R. Fabbri and N. Rutenburg, 'The Tabernacle of Orsanmichele in Context', *Art Bulletin* 63 (1981): 385-405; D. Norman, '"The Glorious Deeds of the Commune": Civic Patronage of Art', in D. Norman (ed.), *Siena, Florence and Padua*, 1: 145-53.

<sup>131</sup> M. Carlin, 'Fast Food and Urban Living Standards in Medieval England', in M. Carlin and J. T. Rosenthal (eds.), *Food and Eating in Medieval Europe* (London, 1998), pp. 27-51.



persons might have water for *preparing food*, and the poor for *their drink*.<sup>132</sup> I am not, however, entirely convinced by Carlin's argument and think it is worth reconsidering the evidence she cites to support her conclusions. I believe that what the city cooks actually show is evidence of a luxury market and a city of abundant food.

### Medieval Cooks

The picture of the medieval cook which comes most readily to mind is that of Hogge of Ware, the Cook in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*. Carlin has used the unpleasant aspects of his description as part of her argument which suggests that the foods produced by medieval cookshops were generally so unappetising as to be avoided by all apart from the poor.<sup>133</sup> Indeed, Chaucer's description of his 'shoppe' in which is 'many a fly loos' is unappealing, and the charges laid against him for re-heating pasties and selling geese with unwholesome parsley stuffing describe precisely the sort of offences for which cooks were regularly condemned.<sup>134</sup> For example, in 1475 London cooks were warned not to 'bake, rost nor seeth flesshe nor fische ij tymes to sell'; in 1421 Coventry cooks were warned not to sell 'no maner rechaufid meit'; and in London in 1376 a cook was imprisoned when found guilty of having sold a goose into which parsley mixed with many feathers was put.<sup>135</sup> However, what she neglects to point out is that Chaucer's cook is generally associated with expensive produce. The goose he sells may be full of rancid stuffing, but goose is a high status food;<sup>136</sup> the dishes that he is anticipated as cooking for the company (boiled chicken and marrow bones spiced with 'poudre-marchant tart and galyngale', 'blankmanger', which was made with imported rice and almonds, and 'mortreux', which is found, along with blancmanger, in aristocratic cookbooks and menus) are all examples of medieval *haute cuisine*.<sup>137</sup> Moreover, the fact that the cook is travelling with the company of pilgrims would suggest that Hogge of Ware is the kind of cook who might find employment travelling

<sup>132</sup> Riley (ed.), *Memorials* p. 225; *CLBF*, p. 128. My italics.

<sup>133</sup> Carlin, 'Fast Food', pp. 40-41.

<sup>134</sup> Chaucer, *Riverside Chaucer*, p. 84, ll. 4346-52.

<sup>135</sup> *CLBL*, p. 129; M. D. Harris (ed.), *The Coventry Leet Book*, EETS, OS 134, 135, 138, 146 (1907-13), p. 26; *CPMR*, 1364-81, p. 227. Maryanne Kowaleski notes that the cooks of Exeter were often brought before the mayor for selling re-heated meat and fish: M. Kowaleski, *Local Markets and Regional Trade in Medieval Exeter* (Cambridge, 1995), p. 142.

<sup>136</sup> Constance Hieatt notes that a 'stubble goose' 'is a mature goose fattened up at harvest time. While younger ("green") geese have sometimes been said to be preferable, a well-fattened stubble goose has always been the traditional treat for Martinmas': C. B. Hieatt, 'A Cook of 14<sup>th</sup>-Century London: Chaucer's Hogge of Ware', in H. Walker (ed.), *Cooks and Other People: Proceedings of the Oxford Symposium on Food and Cookery 1995* (Totnes, 1996), p. 140.

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 138, 142.



with a man of noble status.<sup>138</sup> If Chaucer's cook is any guide, it would appear that the cooking services offered by London cooks were very flexible and could take a variety of forms.

Hogge of Ware does not seem to have been limited to selling his goods to any particular group of people: he is on the pilgrimage as a travelling cook and he has a cookshop which sells both high and lower status produce. The services offered by medieval cooks seem to have been aimed at all sectors of society, not just the city's poor. As even Carlin admits, the itemised list of foods sold by London cookshops in 1378 has many items priced beyond the pocket of the average customer.<sup>139</sup> Evidence for a tiered system of provisioning by the cooks is clear in an ordinance of 1379. In this ordinance the pastelers are accused of having baked in pasties rotten rabbit and geese and 'garbage' (giblets); they are also accused of attempting to pass off beef in pasties as venison. In the ordinance, the source of the 'garbage' is stated to be the hostels of the great lords and the cooks of Bread Street.<sup>140</sup> This would suggest that the cooks of Bread Street were running good cookshops, using high quality ingredients, and passing on their cast-off produce to lower-status pastelers.

Can we get any precise idea of the types of people who might make use of the services offered by cooks? The logical approach to this problem might be to consider who would have adequate private cooking facilities, so that they would not have required the services of the common cooks. If one looks at probate inventories for houses in medieval York, the majority of houses are recorded as possessing kitchens.<sup>141</sup> The range

---

<sup>138</sup> Although Hogge is described as having his own cookshop, his presence on the pilgrimage is clearly explained by Chaucer as being that of a travelling cook, there to cook meals for the pilgrims: Chaucer, *Riverside Chaucer*, p. 29, ll. 379-388. Just such an arrangement is described in a French conversational manual written by an English man in 1396. One of the situations described in this manual is the process of organising a room at the inn and sorting out supper for the lord. This entails the innkeeper going out to buy three ducks from a poulterer, which he brings back to the inn, where they are plucked, gutted, and roasted on a spit by Janyn, the servant/cook who accompanies the lord: P. Meyer, 'La manière de langage qui enseigne a parler et a écrire le français', *Revue critique d'histoire et de littérature* 5 (1870): 389-90. The eating arrangements at inns were clearly flexible as at the inn in Canterbury, where Chaucer's pilgrims are shown ending their pilgrimage in a fifteenth-century continuation of the *Canterbury Tales*, the Pardoner sends out for a 'pye al hote' to break his fast following his visit to St Thomas' shrine: F. J. Furnivall and W. G. Stone (eds.), *The Tale of Beryn [With a Prologue of the Merry Adventure of the Pardoner with a Tapster at Canterbury. Re-edited from the Duke of Northumberland's Unique MS]*, EETS, ES 105 (1909; repr. 1975), p. 3, l. 60.

<sup>139</sup> Carlin, 'Fast Food', pp. 38-39. The list of prices can be found in Riley (ed.), *Memorials*, p. 426.

<sup>140</sup> *CLBH*, pp. 338-39; Riley (ed.), *Memorials*, p. 438.

<sup>141</sup> In general, inventories are problematic source materials as they are not representative of society at large. These particular York inventories are especially problematic as they are for the relatively wealthy parish of St Michael Le Belfry. P. M. Stell and L. Hampson (eds.), *Probate Inventories of the York Diocese 1350-1500* (York, 1999), *passim*. A study of York's medieval kitchens is in H. Arnold, 'The Kitchens of Medieval York: The Evidence of Inventories', *York Historian* 16 (1999): 2-9.



of equipment available in these kitchens, however, varies quite considerably. For example, the kitchen of Thomas Morton, canon residentiary, is very well equipped, containing an oven, spits, contraptions for hanging pots over the fire, frying pans, various brass jars, possenets, dishes, plates, chargers, meat-hooks, various knives, pestles and mortars, and tables on which to prepare meats and pastries; generally, it contains all the equipment necessary for cooking for large scale entertainment.<sup>142</sup> Smaller houses, such as those inhabited by Geoffrey and Idonea Couper, Hugh de Grantham, Robert Talkan, and Thomas Baker, also had kitchens, but their cooking facilities were somewhat more limited than those of Thomas Morton. None of these seem to have had an oven, in which they could have baked their own bread or made pies and pasties; their cooking seems to have been restricted to spit roasting, frying, and pot-cooking.<sup>143</sup> Thus, baked items, such as bread or pies, must have been bought in from outside.<sup>144</sup>

Not all inventories, however, record the presence of a kitchen. For example, the inventory of Thomas Peerson, tollor (1454), records only a hall and chamber. The contents of his hall, in addition to the usual hangings, cushions, stools, screen, and tables, includes mechanisms for suspending pots over a fire, cooking pots, spits, and dishes of various sizes.<sup>145</sup> This would suggest that cooking took place within the hall itself, over a fire, rather than in an separate room.<sup>146</sup> The possession of a kitchen must of itself have been a sign of status. As there are no probate inventories for those belonging to the lower levels of society, it must be assumed that many urban dwellers may have had access only to either very basic or to no cooking facilities. Thus it can be seen that those who required the services of a cook might range from those with no cooking facilities to those who lacked the facilities to produce certain cooked goods. In other words, at least in theory, large sections of society, not just the poor, would have used cookshops to obtain baked goods such as pies and pasties. Indeed, any cooked

---

<sup>142</sup> Stell and Hampson (eds.), *Probate Inventories*, pp. 164-66. The kitchen of William Duffield was equally well equipped; in addition he had his own brew-house and bake-house: *ibid.*, pp. 202-3.

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 44-45, 62-63, 74, 125.

<sup>144</sup> From the case, mentioned above, of the bakers who used adapted moulding-boards to steal dough it is clear that individuals without oven facilities could bring ready-prepared dough to bakers for them to bake into bread: Riley (ed.), *Memorials*, p. 162-65

<sup>145</sup> Stell and Hampson (eds.), *Probate Inventories*, p. 225.

<sup>146</sup> Of course it is not always possible to tell from inventories if a room in fact existed in the building, but, for some reason, was missed from the inventory. Other inventories which imply cooking taking place within the hall are those of John Brown (1474) and John Gaythird (1494). As both of these inventories are incomplete this conclusion is highly tentative: *ibid.*, pp. 265-66, 327.



provisions which were beyond the limits of a house's cooking facilities could be purchased from a cookshop.<sup>147</sup> Certainly, the cooks seem to have functioned as caterers for large feasts. In 1495 the cooks are told not to take on large guild or civic feasts without the advice of the wardens. It also states that those employed as cooks to the mayor or sheriffs are excluded from dressing 'any Festes brekfastes dyners or Sopers for any Weddynges obites Craftes or otherwise out of the Maire or Sherriffes houses' unless done at the expense of the mayor or sheriffs. In addition, once an agreement had been made between someone wishing to pay for a feast and the cook who was willing to dress it, no other cook had the right to interfere.<sup>148</sup> That it was seen fit to include at length the details of this function of the cooks in the ordinances would imply that a reasonable trade existed for cooks catering for high-status events. Certainly, the fact that the ordinance goes on to state that no cook should 'make or do to be made upon one day more than ij dyners and one Souper' at risk of the large fine of 6s. 8d. would suggest that that were the case.<sup>149</sup>

One might argue that those cooks who catered for feasts were exceptional, and it was those cooks who plied their wares directly on the streets who would have served the needs only of the poorest members of society.<sup>150</sup> However, although Carlin likes to see the itinerant street vendors who cried their hot wares in the street, such as are described in *Piers Plowman* and the 'London Lickpenny', as provisioning primarily lower-status customers, a petition from 1475 would suggest otherwise.<sup>151</sup> This petition complains about cooks who, in attempting to entice people to 'bye of their vitailles', pluck at the clothes of passers-by with 'their handes embrowed and fowled'.<sup>152</sup> The petition makes a point of stating that the cooks behave this way not only towards 'common people' but also 'gentilmen'; it seems unlikely that the cooks would have bothered to pluck at the sleeves of 'gentilmen' if they did not sometimes purchase produce from them. Indeed, if

---

<sup>147</sup> As suggested by Heather Swanson, the role of the cooks often overlapped with those of other victuallers: H. Swanson, *Medieval Artisans: An Urban Class in Late Medieval England* (Oxford, 1989), p.17. Hence, on occasions local bakers can be observed taking on the task of filling in for the deficiencies of domestic cooking arrangements. For example, when the two priests at Munden's Chantry in Bridport decide to hold a large social gathering, to which local burgesses, ecclesiastical guests, neighbours, and tenants were invited, they are recorded as paying 5d. to the baker for flour and for the baking of a pie: K. L. Wood-Leigh (ed.), *A Small Household of the XVth Century: The Account Book of Munden's Chantry, Bridport* (Manchester, 1956), p. 9.

<sup>148</sup> *CLBL*, pp. 311-12.

<sup>149</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 313

<sup>150</sup> For example, cooks such as those who were complained about at the beginning of the fifteenth century for having their spits protrude too far into the thoroughfare: *CPMR*, 1413-37, p. 137.

<sup>151</sup> Carlin, 'Fast Food', pp. 31-32, 51.

<sup>152</sup> *CLBL*, p. 129.



one reads carefully the accounts of street vending which occur in both *Piers Plowman* and the 'London Lickpenny' one is struck by a sense of lavish consumerism rather than the provision of the necessities of life for an urban underclass.<sup>153</sup> Langland, usually so stridently moralising, allows the end of his Prologue to slide into something resembling revelry. Coming at the end of Langland's litany of misconduct, the close clustering of the cries of the victuallers calling out their wares of hot pies, good geese and pork, and fine wines produces a sudden flicker of colour, noise, delicious smells, and general sense of enjoyment.<sup>154</sup> For those with money, however it is earned, London will provide a veritable feast. Similarly, in the 'London Lickpenny' when the 'Rybbes of befe, bothe fat and fine', 'Hot pescods', 'Strawbery rype, and chery in the ryse', 'Hot shepes fete', and 'many a pie' are combined with the rich spices and fine fabrics which are available for purchase, they serve to create London as a city of desirable things which can be bought by those with money in their pockets; London is constructed as a consumer's paradise.<sup>155</sup> More importantly, the poor are specifically excluded from this world of plenty through the repeated refrain 'For lacke of money I myght not spede'.

Carlin's article focuses specifically on the role of cooks in London. If one looks at the evidence provided for the role of cooks in York her arguments would seem to carry even less weight. In her discussion of London, Carlin discounts the role of cooks in provisioning travellers, as the cookshops in the later Middle Ages were located in Bread Street, Ironmonger Lane, and Eastcheap, rather than by the docks as in earlier times; she also suggests that travelling noblemen carried their own provisions with them and so would not have required the services of the cooks.<sup>156</sup> In York, however, the cooks seem to have had an officially sanctioned role in providing travellers with food. In the proclamation made concerning the sale of victuals in the Thursday Market a complaint is made on the subject of cooks and regrators keeping to their ordained times of buying, including the terse statement, 'Thay knawe it wele ynogh'. The proclamation goes on to state that the cooks are not able to purchase victuals 'fra evynsang ryng at Seint Michel kyrk at Osebryghend on to the morne that pryde stryke at the mynster'. However, a single notable exception is made: 'bot on to the valu of xvijj d. q<sup>a</sup> for dyners

<sup>153</sup> This idea of civic consumerism will be explored at greater length later in the chapter.

<sup>154</sup> Langland, *Piers Plowman*, p. 13, ll. 226-30.

<sup>155</sup> 'London Lickpenny' in J. M. Dean (ed.), *Medieval English Political Writings*, TEAMS Middle English Text Series (Kalamazoo, 1996), pp. 223-24, ll. 63, 67, 68, 85, 90.

<sup>156</sup> Carlin, 'Fast Food', pp. 33-38.



of travelyng men'.<sup>157</sup> Similarly, in the Cooks' Ordinances of 1425 it is stated that no public cook should roast any meats to sell on holy days, except for the arrivals of eminent persons or if any large meetings of travelling people or pilgrims, and other outsiders happen to occur in the city. In such circumstances it was certainly to be allowed that cooks should have meats and victuals in their houses to roast.<sup>158</sup> Clearly the York civic government saw the role of the cooks in providing food for travellers, both those leaving and those entering the city, as sufficiently important to necessitate the relaxation of the rules regarding both hours of purchasing and Sunday trading.<sup>159</sup>

In addition the York cooks, like those in London, obviously catered for large feasts. The 1425 the Cooks' Ordinances state that no foreigner will be allowed to prepare meals for general feasts or weddings, nor meetings of guilds or fraternities unless he is admitted to the freedom of the city and pays the expenses and charges annually pertaining to the profession of cooks.<sup>160</sup> In general, the trade of the cooks must have been fairly brisk, for the second article of the Cooks' Ordinances forbids the wives of anyone from another profession to work as cooks, unless they are considered fit to undertake this trade.<sup>161</sup> This, by implication, suggests a market burgeoning beyond the capacities of the city's cooks, but of which they remained, nevertheless, very protective.<sup>162</sup> Moreover, it suggests that certain sectors of society had superior cooking facilities which were used by (skilled) wives to provision those sectors of society with less extensive cooking facilities. This may mean that they cooked food on a daily basis for the local community, or that they provided an "outside catering" service for friends and neighbours on large occasions such as weddings and funerals. It seems unlikely that

---

<sup>157</sup> *YMB*, 1: 223-24. 'Dyner' is defined as the first main meal of the day (i.e. it is not consumed at a specific time): H. Kurath and S. M. Kuhn (eds.), *Middle English Dictionary*, vol. 2 (Ann Arbor, 1959).

<sup>158</sup> *YMB*, 2: 161.

<sup>159</sup> It should also be noted that although evidence exists in York for high status travellers carrying with them provisions and even their own cooks, this does not seem to have stopped the civic government perceiving the role of cooks provisioning travellers as important and worthy of protection within civic law. For example in 1444 and 1445 when official journeys were made by 'the mayor and other commissioners and legal experts' to inspect fishgarths on the Ouse they took with them two or more cooks and purchased their raw provisions along the way: A. Rycraft, "'Messing About in Boats': The York Chamberlains' Accounts, 1444-5", in H. Walker (ed.), *Food on the Move: Proceedings of the Oxford Symposium on Food and Cookery 1996* (Totnes, 1996), pp. 258-64.

<sup>160</sup> *YMB*, 2: 160. If one looks at the funeral expenses noted in inventories cooks are often mentioned as being paid for their services: Stell and Hampson (eds.), *Probate Inventories*, pp. 55, 60, 159, 262.

<sup>161</sup> *YMB*, 2: 160. The intrusion of the wives of other craftsmen in the cooks' trade seems to have been a recurring problem as this injunction is repeated in the Cooks' Ordinances of 1729. A discussion of the role of cooks in early-modern York can be found in P. Brears, 'The Food Guilds of York', in E. White (ed.), *Feeding a City: York. The Provision of Food from the Roman Times to the Beginning of the Twentieth Century* (Totnes, 2000), pp. 79-100.

<sup>162</sup> Although I concede that it might also indicate a meagre trade over which the cooks were eager to maintain a monopoly.



these wives took on this task solely in order to feed the poor, as presumably the profit margins would have been unattractive. Unfortunately, there are no surviving medieval probate inventories for cooks which would allow some idea of the kind of cooking undertaken by city cooks. The surviving wills from before 1500 give no record of cooking equipment being bequeathed.<sup>163</sup> From the slightly later period, however, there is a will for William Thornton, cook (1553), which records bequests of what seem to be moulds: namely a 'print called Sampson', a 'print with fleur delice', a 'small leache print, a 'print with lion and unicorn', a 'standing print with hart and hind', a 'print with one knote', a 'close print with birds', a lesser print of 'Michael', a 'greate Michael print with other arms on it, a 'small print', a 'print with wheatsheaf' and a 'print with a dolfinge'. Some of these prints are left by Thornton to William Tyson, a fellow cook; he in turn leaves those prints to his own apprentice.<sup>164</sup> These suggest decorative, fancy pastries and perhaps subtleties which would have been bought for special occasions.<sup>165</sup>

In general this information builds up a picture of the urban cook providing a service to individuals of various social statuses. They seem to have been seen to provide a vital role in the provisioning of travellers, to have served as 'outside caterers' for large feasts, to have provided cooked foods which could not be produced by domestic cooking facilities (a service which was clearly not exclusive to the poor), and to have provided appetising hot food for the consumption of shoppers and others in the city streets. This is not to suggest that the cooks did not also play a role in providing cooked food for the poor who had no cooking facilities. Certain civic legislation seems to have an underclass in mind. For example, the mayors proclamation in 1379 states that the London pie-bakers are to bake beef pasties at  $\frac{1}{2}d.$  which are just as good as those at  $1d.$ <sup>166</sup> Likewise in Coventry in 1427 it was ordered that the cooks 'frozens furth make halpenny pyes as other Townes doth'.<sup>167</sup> My contention is, however, that the evidence would suggest, contrary to Carlin's conclusions, that the *primary* role of cooks was not

---

<sup>163</sup> A typical example would be the will of John Isabell, cook of Micklegate (1390), in which the only point of dubious interest and relevance is the reference to his leaving '*gardinarum meum cum duabus vinariis*', which may refer to a garden with vines (as it is interpreted by T. McLean, *Medieval English Gardens* (London, 1981), p. 79; McLean makes various errors of interpretation regarding this will), though more likely it refers to a yard with wine-storage vessels: BIHR, Probate Register 1, fol. 9r. For the meaning of '*vinariis*' see R. E. Latham, *Revised Latin Word-List: From British and Irish Sources with Supplement* (London, 1999).

<sup>164</sup> BIHR, Probate Register 13B, fol. 826r; BIHR Probate Register 17, fol. 128v.

<sup>165</sup> A London ordinance of 1475 refers to 'Tartes or Flawnes' and 'mold ware ... made by hand' and by 'mold', which would seem to refer to similar sorts of products: *CLBL*, pp. 129-30.

<sup>166</sup> Riley (ed.), *Memorials*, p. 432.

<sup>167</sup> Harris (ed.), *The Coventry Leet Book*, p. 111.



to provide hot food for the urban poor, but rather to serve all sectors of the urban community with what could be termed a luxury service.

Thus, although this chapter opened with the idea of bodily necessity and took the premise of the provision of bodily necessities being a prerequisite for peace in the medieval city, it has become apparent through my examination of civic legislation surrounding food sales that something other than the provision of basic bodily needs lies at the heart of such legislation. While undoubtedly some legislation is driven by concerns over the poorest and most vulnerable members of society, the majority of legislation seems to be looking towards food provision on a grander scale. What appears to be observable behind civic food legislation is not so much a rhetoric of necessity but rather a rhetoric of plenty. In the rest of this chapter I shall consider the ideology which may have lain behind such more complex legislation. A recent thesis has noted a link between the production of civic customals and the development of a civic ideology.<sup>168</sup> I wish to suggest that civic attitudes towards food provisions can be similarly linked to the construction of a specific civic ideology.

### **Food Provision and Civic Ideology**

Deborah O'Brien's thesis examines the medieval customals of London and York and considers their importance as symbols of urban government. She suggests that the city gained its legal identity through the charters and statutes which were carefully and often repeatedly copied into an archive of writings. Thus, although the city's books of laws and statutes were tools of its officials' government, they were also one of their justifications and symbols of their rule.<sup>169</sup> Moreover, they were sometimes decorated high-status documents, which adapted imagery promoting royal potency into an iconography of power for their own urban authority. Even if not so lavish, they show neatness and careful thought in construction which confirm the significance with which they were regarded by civic officials.<sup>170</sup> In addition she considers their inclusion of historic material as a willingness by their compilers to manipulate the readers' sense of the historical quality of their texts, and to conceal the turbulence and anxiety amidst which their compilations were produced with descriptive images of success and prosperity.<sup>171</sup> It is my contention that the material concerned with food provisioning that

---

<sup>168</sup> D. J. S. O'Brien "The Veray Registre of All Trouthe": The Content, Function, and Character of the Civic Registers of London and York c. 1274-c. 1438' (Unpublished PhD Diss., York University, 1999).

<sup>169</sup> O'Brien, "Veray Registre", p. 204.

<sup>170</sup> As was the case with the York Memorandum Books.

<sup>171</sup> O'Brien, "Veray Registre", pp. 223-33.



is contained in these custumals contributed to the formation of a civic ideology of plenty.

It is to one of the historical descriptions that I wish to turn first: William FitzStephen's laudatory *Description of London*. This *Description* was written in the second-half of the twelfth century and is found in its entirety at the front of the fourteenth-century *Liber legum regum antiquorum*, which was compiled by Andrew Horn, a fishmonger and chamberlain of London.<sup>172</sup> Alongside FitzStephen's work are an abridged version of Henry of Huntingdon's *Historia Anglorum* and selections from Brunetto Latini's *Li livres dou trésor*.<sup>173</sup> The rest of the *Liber regum* contains a range of royal records (including the *Magna carta* and statutes of Merton, Malborough, Westminster, and Gloucester); a collection of royal charters from William I to Edward I; the *Leges Anglorum*; regulations regarding the Assize of Bread; craft ordinances; statutes for foreign merchants; and a list of London's mayors, sheriffs, chamberlains, and coroners from 1276-1321.<sup>174</sup>

FitzStephen's *Description* is an example of the literary genre of *encomium urbis*, which first became popular in the Classical period and was still current in Europe in the fourteenth century.<sup>175</sup> What is remarkable about FitzStephen's *Description* is the attention he pays to the minutiae of everyday London life. FitzStephen's text is concerned not so much with the city government, as with the mundane features of the inhabitants' lives. The result is that FitzStephen produces an account of the city in which there is a sense of the texture of life in medieval London.<sup>176</sup> Antonia Gransden

---

<sup>172</sup> O'Brien, "'Veray Registre'", p. 87. The *Liber regum* survives as part of the modern *Liber custumarum*. For a discussion of the original structure of the *Liber regum* see N. R. Ker, 'Liber Custumarum, and Other Manuscripts Formerly at the Guildhall', *Guildhall Miscellany* 3 (1984): 42-45. The text of FitzStephen's *Description* is in Riley (ed.), *Munimenta Gildhallae Londoniensis*, 2, i: 1-15. FitzStephen's *Description* is extant in five medieval manuscripts: H. Kleineke, 'Carleton's Book: William FitzStephen's "Description of London" in a Late Fourteenth-Century Common-Place Book', *Historical Research* 74 (2001): 117. It was also included by John Stow in his sixteenth-century *Survey of London*: C. L. Kingsford (ed.), *A Survey of London by John Stow Reprinted from the Text of 1603* (Oxford, 1908), 2: 223-29. An excerpt of FitzStephen's *Description* is also found in the *Liber albus*: Riley (ed.), *Liber albus*, p. 54.

<sup>173</sup> O'Brien, "'Veray Registre'", pp. 89-90; N. R. Ker, *Medieval Manuscripts in British Libraries. Volume 1: London* (Oxford, 1969), p. 21.

<sup>174</sup> O'Brien, "'Veray Registre'", pp. 89-90.

<sup>175</sup> For a description of the nature and contents of medieval European *encomium urbis* see, J. K. Hyde, 'Medieval Descriptions of Cities' in J. K. Hyde, *Literacy and its Uses*, ed. D. Waley (Manchester, 1993), pp. 1-27.

<sup>176</sup> FitzStephen's account is different in tone to other laudatory accounts of medieval cities as can be seen from Bonvesin della Riva's description of Milan, *De magnalibus urbis Mediolani* (1288), translated in part in R. S. Lopez and I. W. Raymond, *Medieval Trade in the Mediterranean World* (London, 1955), pp. 61-69. Bonvesin's description is very much in abstract terms and does not bring the city to life. Bonvesin's text, Giovanni da Nono's fourteenth-century account of Padua, and the anonymous late thirteenth-century verse description of Genoa are in Dean (ed. and trans.), *The Towns of Italy*, pp. 11-23.



even goes so far as to suggest that it is ‘the most detailed and realistic description of a city written in medieval England’.<sup>177</sup> Such an assertion, however, ignores the fact that the *Description* belongs to a genre which has not realism as its aim but rather idealism and praise. As John Ganim points out, ‘the very structure of his description, perhaps what he “sees” as a narrator and hence what we see in his description, is profoundly mediated, even determined, by the prior discourse of the idea of a city’.<sup>178</sup> To be realistic FitzStephen’s *Description* would also have had to include the disease, poverty, and crime prevalent in the city.<sup>179</sup> What we have in the *Description* is an idealised version of London.

Strikingly, food is absolutely central to this idealised description of London. The city is enclosed by the mighty river Thames, which is filled with fish.<sup>180</sup> Adjacent to the city are pastures and pleasant meadows containing streams which turn water-mills, alongside which are a great forest, with woodland pastures filled with wild animals such as stags, fallow deer, wild boar, and bulls, and fields yielding luxuriant crops.<sup>181</sup> The city itself centres upon the banks of the river, and the bustling life of the city’s inhabitants on the river banks is described in food terms.<sup>182</sup> Among the wines sold from ships and the vintners’ cellars on the river bank is the public cook-shop, where one can purchase different foods according to the season and one’s budget. Every day there can

<sup>177</sup> A. Gransden, ‘Realistic Observation in Twelfth-Century England’, *Speculum* 46 (1972): 46.

<sup>178</sup> J. M. Ganim, ‘The Experience of Modernity in Late Medieval Literature: Urbanism, Experience and Rhetoric in Some Early Descriptions of London’, in J. J. Paxson, L. M. Clopper, and S. Tomasch (eds.), *The Performance of Middle English Culture: Essays on Chaucer and the Drama in Honor of Martin Stevens* (Cambridge, 1998), p. 83

<sup>179</sup> This process of idealisation is examined in detail in J. Scattergood, ‘Misrepresenting the City: Genre, Intertextuality and William FitzStephen’s *Description of London*’, in J. Boffey and P. King (eds.), *London and Europe in the Later Middle Ages* (London, 1995), pp. 1-34.

<sup>180</sup> ‘*fluvius maximus, piscosus Thamesis*’: Riley (ed.), *Munimenta Gildhallae Londoniensis*, 2, i: 3

<sup>181</sup> ‘*Item, a Borea sunt agri pascui, et pratorum grata planities, aquis fluvialibus interfluis; ad quas molinorum versatiles rotae citantur cum murmure jocosum. Proxime patet foresta ingens, saltus nemorosi, ferarum latebrae, cervorum, damarum, aprorum, et taurorum sive strum. Agri urbis sationales non sunt jejuna glarae, sed pingues Asiae campi, qui “faciunt laetas segete”; et suorum cultorum repleant horrea “Cerealis mergite culmi”*’: Riley (ed.), *Munimenta Gildhallae Londoniensis*, 2, i: 4; ‘Also there are on the north side pastures and pleasant meadow lands through which flow streams wherein the turning of mill-wheels makes a cheerful sound. Very near lies a great forest with woodland pastures in which there are lairs of wild animals: stags, fallow deer, wild boars and bulls. The tilled lands of the city are not of barren gravel, but fat Asian plains that yield luxuriant crops and fill the tillers’ barns with sheaves of Ceres’: William FitzStephen, ‘A Description of the Most Noble City of London’, in D. C. Douglas and G. W. Greenaway (eds.), *English Historical Documents 1042-1189*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (London, 1981), p. 1025.

<sup>182</sup> The importance of the Thames to London’s position as trade centre had been recognised at least from Anglo-Saxon times. Bede spoke thus of it: ‘*quorum metropolis Lundonia ciuitas est, super ripam praefati posita et ipsa multorum emporium populorum terra marique uenientium*’ (the main city of which [the kingdom of the east Saxons] is London, which is on the banks of the aforesaid river [the Thames] and is an emporium for many nations who come to it by land and sea): B. Colgrave and R. A. B. Mynors (ed. and trans.), *Bede’s Ecclesiastical History of the English People* (Oxford, 1969), pp. 142-43.



be found meats roasted, fried, and boiled, coarser meats for the poor and more delicate (such as venison and all kinds of poultry) for the rich.<sup>183</sup> The cook-shop is quite clearly seen as central to the concept of civic life, especially through its provision of food for the travellers and soldiers entering the city.<sup>184</sup>

Outside the city, the field of Smithfield is described, in vigorous tournament terms, as where elegant and powerful horses are sold and also farm animals.<sup>185</sup> London itself is seen as a blur of bright colours and exotic smells as a consequence of its status as the hub of foreign trade where merchants delight to bring their luxury goods, including spices and oils.<sup>186</sup> The citizens themselves are praised for their readiness to entertain guests and to celebrate momentous occasions with feasts, which they provision through hunting and hawking in the lands of Middlesex, Hertfordshire, the Chiltern

---

<sup>183</sup> *'Praeterea est in Londonia, super ripam fluminis, inter vina et navibus et cellis vinariis venalia, publica coquina. Ibi quotidie, pro tempore, est invenire cibaria, fercula, fruxia, elixa, pisces, pisciculos, carnes grossiores pauperibus, deliciores divitioribus, venationum, avium, avicularum'*: Riley (ed.), *Munimenta Gildhallae Londoniensis*, 2, i: 6; 'Besides, there is in London on the river bank among the wines for sale in ships and in the cellars of the vintners a public cook-shop. There daily you may find according to the season, dishes of meat, roast, fried and boiled, large and small fish, coarser meats for the poor and more delicate for the rich, such as venison and big and small birds': FitzStephen, 'Description', p. 1026.

<sup>184</sup> *'Quantalibet militem vel peregrinorum infinitas intrant urbem, qualibet diei vel noctis hora, vel ab urbe exitura, ne vel hii nimium jejurent, vel alii impransi exeant, illuc, si placet, divertunt, et se pro modo suo singuli reficiunt'*: Riley (ed.), *Munimenta Gildhallae Londoniensis*, 2, i: 7; 'However great the multitude of soldiers and travellers entering the city, or preparing to go out of it, at any hour of the day or night - that these may not fast too long, and those may not go out supperless - they turn aside thither, if they please, where every man can refresh himself in his own way': FitzStephen, 'Description', p. 1026.

<sup>185</sup> *'Juvat videre gradarios cute succo satura, pilo connitente, suaviter ambulantes; pedibus lateraliter simul erectis, quasi a subalternis, et demissis: hinc, equos qui armigeris magis conveniunt, durius incedentes, sed expedite tamen, qui quasi a contradictoribus pedes simul elevant et deponunt: hinc, nobiles pullos juniores, qui, nondum fraeno bene assuanti, "Altius incedunt, et mollia crura reponunt": hinc, summarios, membris validis et vegetis: hinc, dextrarios pretiosos, elegantis formae, staturae honestae, micantes auribus, cervicibus arduis, clunibus obesis'*. There follows a description of buyers trying out their purchases and races which are run on the horses which the riders view as serious competition: *'Certant sessorae laudis amore, spe victorae, equis admissis subdere calcaria, et nec minus urgere eos virgis et ciere clamoribus'*: Riley (ed.), *Munimenta Gildhallae Londoniensis*, 2, i: 7-8; 'It is pleasant to see the high-stepping palfreys with their gleaming coats, as they go through their paces, putting their feet down alternately on one side together. Next one can see the horses suitable for esquires, moving faster though less smoothly, lifting and setting down, as it were, the opposite fore and hind feet: here are colts of fine breed, but not yet accustomed to the bit, stepping high with jaunty tread: there are the sumpter-horses, powerful and spirited; and after them are the war-horses, costly, elegant of form, noble of stature, with ears quickly tremulous, necks raised and large haunches [...] The riders covetous of applause and ardent for victory, plunge their spurs into the loose-reined horses, and urge them forwards with their shouts and their whips': FitzStephen, 'Description', pp. 1026-27.

<sup>186</sup> *'Ad urbem hanc, ex omni natione quae sub coelo est, navalia gaudent institores habere commercia; Aurum mittit Arabs, species et thura Sabaeus; Arma Scythes; oleum palmarum divite silva Pingue solum Babylon; Nilus lapides pretiosos; Seres purpureas vestes; Galli sua vina; Norwegi, Rusci, varium, griseum, sabelinas'*: Riley (ed.), *Munimenta Gildhallae Londoniensis*, 2, i: 9; 'To this city from every nation under the heaven merchants delight to bring their trade by sea. The Arabians send gold; the Sabaen spice and incense. The Scythian brings arms. and from the rich, fat, land of Babylon come oil of palms. The Nile sends precious stones; the men of Norway and Russia furs and sables; nor is China absent with purple silk. The Gauls come with their wines': FitzStephen, 'Description', p. 1027.



country, and Kent.<sup>187</sup> The theme of food runs throughout the description of the city, often tying together the disparate elements of the text. The overwhelming image produced by the description, as in Lorenzetti's fresco of the 'Good City', is of the city as a thriving, fertile, centre of abundance. Whether citizen or visitor, the individual is assured of being served with an awe-inspiring supply of provisions of high, health-giving quality. London is depicted as a kind of new Eden.<sup>188</sup>

Why might such a description of London be considered important enough to be incorporated into a London custumal more than a century after its composition?<sup>189</sup> The *Liber regum* was a high-status document, the product of a single, carefully-planned programme of writing and elaborate decoration by professional craftsmen.<sup>190</sup> As such, therefore, its inclusion cannot have been unpremeditated; it must have been perceived to possess a deliberate function, which fitted in with the aims of the text as a whole. Perhaps a clue to its inclusion may come from the fact that FitzStephen's *Description* refers to London's status as the New Troy, a link which had first been made by Geoffrey of Monmouth in the early-twelfth century.<sup>191</sup> Geoffrey describes the foundation of New Troy by the Trojan, Brutus, and his granting of a law-code to its citizens, an idea which

---

<sup>187</sup> 'Non puto urbem esse in qua sint probabiliores consuetudines, in ecclesiis visitandis, ordinatis Dei honorandis, festis feriandis, eleemosynis dandis, in hospitibus suscipiendis, in desponsationibus firmandis, matrimoniis contrahendis, nuptiis celebrandis, conviviis ordandis, convivis hilarandis; etiam, in exequiis curandis et cadaveribus humandis': Riley (ed.), *Munimenta Gildhallae Londoniensis*, 2, i: 9; 'I do not think there is a city with a better record for church-going, doing honour to God's ordinances, keeping feast-days, giving alms and hospitality to strangers, confirming betrothals, contracting marriages, celebrating weddings, providing feasts, entertaining guests, and also, it may be added, in care for funerals and for burial of the dead': FitzStephen, 'Description', p. 1027. 'Plurimi civium delectantur, ludentes in avibus coeli, nisis, accipitribus, et hujusmodi; et in canicis militantibus in silvis. Habentque cives suum jus venandi in Middelsexia, Hertfordsira, et tota Chiltrā, et in Cantia usque ad aquam Crayae': Riley (ed.), *Munimenta Gildhallae Londoniensis*, 2, i: 14; 'Many of the citizens take pleasure in sporting with birds of the air, with hawks, falcons, and such-like, and with hounds that hunt their prey in the woods. The citizens have the rights of the chase in Middlesex, Hertfordshire, all the Chiltern country, and in Kent as far as the river Cray': FitzStephen, 'Description', pp. 1029-30.

<sup>188</sup> Dante also makes use of the idea of the city as a new Eden. See, G. Mazzotta, *Dante, Poet of the Desert: History and Allegory in the Divine Comedy* (Princeton, 1979), pp. 106-125.

<sup>189</sup> The selections from Latini's *Tresor* show evidence of being adapted to fit London civic life: O'Brien, 'Veray Registre', p. 92. Thus it is unlikely that the presence of any of the texts in this highly planned civic document is merely fortuitous, but rather the product of a process of careful selection to fit a specific civic ideology.

<sup>190</sup> O'Brien, 'Veray Registre', p. 91.

<sup>191</sup> 'Urbe Roma, secundum Chronicorum fidem, satis antiquior est. Ab eisdem quippe patribus Trojanis, haec prius a Bruto condita est quam illa a Remo et Romulo; unde et adhuc antiquis eisdem utuntur legibus et communibus institutis': Riley (ed.), *Munimenta Gildhallae Londoniensis*, 2, i: 9; 'London, as the historians have shown, is a much older city than Rome, for though it derives from the same Trojan ancestors, it was founded by Brutus before Rome was founded by Romulus and Remus. Wherefore they still have the same laws from their common origin': FitzStephen, 'Description', p. 1027. J. S. P. Tatlock, *The Legendary History of Britain: Geoffrey of Monmouth's Historia regum Britanniae and its Early Vernacular Versions* (Berkeley, 1950), pp. 30 and 111.



was to play an important part in medieval discussions of London's legal status.<sup>192</sup> It is not surprising that London's government officials would have been keen to promulgate this mythology of London, which not only looks backwards into a glorious historical past, but also forwards into an illustrious future.<sup>193</sup> Likewise, the contents of the *Liber regum* link the city to the past through texts such as the *Historia Anglorum*, the *Magna carta*, and the royal charters, whilst bringing the city's history right up to the present with the lists of civic officials. The story of the greatness of contemporary London comes through the recording of its own statutes and ordinances. Just as one notes that what is striking and innovative about FitzStephen's account of New Troy is its focus upon the plentiful supply of food to be found in London, so in the statutes and ordinances used to record contemporary London's greatness regulations concerning food are central.<sup>194</sup> The New Troy (London) which is envisaged at the end of the twelfth century and finds its way into the official civic documentation of the fourteenth century is a place renowned for its plentiful food supply.

To what extent, however, is this image of a London full of plentiful food merely a private image and to what extent can London civic officials be seen as actively publicising this image? As the *Liber regum* seems to have been conceived and produced as a complete reference work and a showpiece item, it must be regarded, if not as a public document (the extent to which it would have been visible to a wide audience is debatable), at least as a document that shows an awareness of the public role of official documentation.<sup>195</sup> A later civic custumal, the *Liber albus*, which was compiled in 1419 by John Carpenter, Common Clerk of London, under the instruction of Mayor Richard Whittington, makes clear the reasoning behind its own composition in its *præmium*.<sup>196</sup>

---

<sup>192</sup> J. Clark, 'Trinovatum - The Evolution of a Legend', *Journal of Medieval History* 7 (1981): 145. The process and function of myth-making in cities is discussed in G. Rosser, 'Myth, Image and Social Process in the English Medieval Town', *Urban History* 23 (1996): 5-25.

<sup>193</sup> It was rumoured in 1388 that Nicholas Bembre, previously Mayor of London, had wanted to change the name of London to 'Troy' or 'Little Troy': Kleineke, 'Carleton's Book', p. 124.

<sup>194</sup> Geoffrey of Monmouth, and his later translators, Wace and Lawman, discuss the fertility of Britain as a whole but not London in particular. The vision of New Troy as the place of plenty is continued by Lydgate. Lydgate's New Troy, which is deeply concerned with defence and government, has the city's food supply at its heart. Through the middle of it, like in FitzStephen's *Description*, runs the great river that supplies the city with trade, powers many mills 'her grayn and corn to grinde,/ Hem to sustene', and is also 'of fysche ful plenteuous'. Even the wind that blows through the city streets is Zephyrus which 'is comfortable/ For to norysce thinges vegetable': John Lydgate, *Troy Book: Selections*, ed. R. R. Edwards, TEAMS Middle English Texts (Kalamazoo, 1998), pp. 94-96, ll. 731-41, 673-680.

<sup>195</sup> See, O'Brien, 'Veray Registre', pp. 91-99.

<sup>196</sup> Like the *Liber regum*, the *Liber albus*, contains historical material (such as a list of London mayors and etymologies of the names of the offices in civic government) which places the text within a clear historical narrative, again both looking back to a glorious past and forward to an equally glorious future.



Its function was, in a time when pestilence might wipe out the entire senior levels of the official administration, to collect together scattered and disparate records into a single volume in order to instruct junior officials and to ensure that disputes might be avoided.<sup>197</sup> Thus the civic customal can be seen as collecting together diffuse legislation is to produce a coherent public image for the civic government. As one literary historian has suggested, such an act of compilation creates a single point of authority and permits the disparate records to speak with a single voice.<sup>198</sup> That single voice can be heard giving the message that London, with its roots firmly in an illustrious past, is here and now the locus of justice and the place of plenty.

To what extent, however, can the wider populace of London be regarded as being aware of and involved in such a view of London? An investigation of practices in medieval France has revealed the general population becoming increasingly involved in the legislative process and becoming actively involved in an official documentary culture focused upon the centres of civic administration.<sup>199</sup> Certainly, in England there seems to have been increased access to some kinds of civic documentation with the construction of the Guildhall library between 1423 and 1425.<sup>200</sup> The principle guiding force behind the Guildhall Library seems to have been John Carpenter, the compiler of the *Liber albus*.<sup>201</sup> This library, which acquired collections of books and documents relating to the city of London, was designed to allow the humbler members of the community access to books.<sup>202</sup> Indeed, Carpenter's own will records a desire to make books available to all those interested in London customs and practices. He bequeathed several books of various kinds to his clerk, Robert Blount. Significantly, he bequeathed to Robert all his 'little books or quartos' of acts and records concerning the 'common law of the realm' and the 'custom of the city of London' for his use during life, on condition that on his death they went to 'the chamber of the Guildhall of London'.<sup>203</sup> He likewise bequeathed an unknown number of his books to the Guildhall Library for the

---

<sup>197</sup> Riley (ed.), *Liber albus*, p. 3.

<sup>198</sup> S. Lindenbaum, 'London Texts and Literate Practice', in D. Wallace (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Medieval Literature* (Oxford, 1999), p. 295.

<sup>199</sup> B. Bedos-Rezak, 'Civic Liturgies and Urban Records in Northern France, 1000-1400', in B. A. Hanawalt and K. L. Reyerson (eds.), *City and Spectacle in Medieval Europe* (London, 1994), pp. 34-55.

<sup>200</sup> C. M. Barron, *The Medieval Guildhall of London* (London, 1974), p. 33.

<sup>201</sup> W. Scase, 'Reginald Pecock, John Carpenter and John Colop's "Common Profit" Books: Aspects of Book Ownership and Circulation in Fifteenth-Century London', *Medium Aevum* 61 (1992): 267.

<sup>202</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 268.

<sup>203</sup> T. Brewer, *Memoir of the Life and Times of John Carpenter, Town Clerk of London in the Realm of Henry V and Henry VI and Founder of the City of London School with an Appendix of Documents and Particulars of Benefaction to the School* (London, 1856), p. 141.



use of ‘students and visitors’.<sup>204</sup> So, undoubtedly there was in the later Middle Ages an increased awareness on the part of government officials of the public nature of official documentation, and, moreover, a sense of its potential uses in the construction of civic ideology.<sup>205</sup> Likewise, there was an increased accessibility to civic documentation by a larger section of the populace.

Perhaps more significant, however, is the fact that in the later Middle Ages one begins to find compilations of material, such as is found in the official customals, in the private collections of London citizens.<sup>206</sup> Recently Hannes Kleineke has discovered an edition of FitzStephen’s *Description* in a commonplace book dating from the last quarter of the fourteenth century.<sup>207</sup> Alongside the *Description*, as in the London customals, are numerous items concerned both with the history of the city of London and its contemporary daily running, such as lists of civic officials, charters granted to the city, the Assize of Bread and Ale, statutes concerning food sales, etc.<sup>208</sup> Kleineke has attributed ownership of this commonplace book to Thomas Carleton, a London embroiderer, alderman, and MP, who was involved in John of Northampton’s fight against the victuallers.<sup>209</sup> Similarly, the early-sixteenth century commonplace book of the London cellarer, Richard Hill, contains lists of parish churches, the taxes applied to the various wards of London, the Assize of bread and ale, statutes of victuallers, William Dunbar’s ‘Treatise of London’, and other literary material.<sup>210</sup> The

---

<sup>204</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 143-44.

<sup>205</sup> The government’s awareness of the public nature of civic documents and their significance can be demonstrated by the burning in 1387 by Nicholas Brembre, Mayor, of the so-called ‘Jubile Book’, which had been created in the mayoralty of his opponent John of Northampton. In 1384 an number of its ordinances had been rejected, but their mere physical presence in a civic volume appear to have been enough to cause disturbance: *CLBH*, pp. 234-35. It was stated that on account of ‘certain new ordinances, repugnant to the old and approved customs’ of the government officials, ‘dissentions and disputes were often caused among the citizens’, therefore it was to be burnt. The number who turned out to see the burning was so substantial as to necessitate the assembly’s withdrawal from the Upper Chamber to the Guildhall below: Riley (ed.), *Memorials*, pp. 494-95; *CLBH*, p. 303. The contents of the ‘Jubile Book’ were probably directed chiefly against victuallers: Bird, *Turbulent London*, p. 86. See also C. Barron, ‘London 1300-1540’, pp. 405-6.

<sup>206</sup> S. Rees Jones, ‘Thomas More’s *Utopia* and Medieval London’, in R. Horrox and S. Rees Jones (eds.), *Pragmatic Utopias: Ideals and Communities 1200-1630* (Cambridge, 2001), pp. 119-20.

<sup>207</sup> BL, MS Additional 38131, fols. 83r-84v. This edition of FitzStephen’s *Description* is printed as Appendix A in H. Kleineke, ‘William FitzStephen’s “Description of London”: A New Edition’ (Unpublished MA Diss., London University, 1994).

<sup>208</sup> A list of the contents of the manuscript can be found in *Catalogue of Additions to the Manuscripts in the British Museum in the Years 1911-1915. Part I: Descriptions*, vol. 19a (1925; repr. London, 1969), pp. 31-40.

<sup>209</sup> Kleineke, ‘Carleton’s Book’, pp. 120-21. He also shows how, in small details, the text has been adapted to reflect the London that Carleton knew: *ibid.*, pp. 119-20.

<sup>210</sup> A list of the contents is found in R. Dyboski (ed.), *Songs, Carols, and Other Miscellaneous Poems from the Balliol MS. 354, Richard Hill’s Commonplace-Book*, EETS, ES 101 (1908; repr. 1937), pp. xxxiv-lix.



commonplace book of John Colyns, a sixteenth-century London mercer and bookseller contains literary texts, medical treatises and moral proverbs alongside items concerning civic and mercantile issues.<sup>211</sup> Thus, the concern of the civic government to represent the city as a place of plenty, which can be identified in the *Liber regum* at the beginning of the fourteenth century, has, by the end of the century, found a wider audience in the city as London's citizens become personally involved in the creation of collections of materials which perpetuate this ideology. The dream of London as a New Eden had clearly taken hold of the popular imagination.

This ideology of plenty is also evident in non-textual sources from the period such as the London 'seal of the barons'.<sup>212</sup> On the obverse is depicted the figure of St Paul behind a cityscape, including his cathedral, supporting a heraldic flag of the arms of England. In front of the cityscape is the Thames, with a river-wall and gate in the foreground. John Cherry has suggested that that the river wall represents a historic view of the city, the river wall being the Roman river wall described in FitzStephen's *Description*, and already destroyed by the time he was writing.<sup>213</sup> Abigail Wheatley has further linked the seal with London's legendary past through the gate in the centre of the river wall, which she identifies as Billingsgate, which was closely linked in Geoffrey of Monmouth's work with Belinus, the ancient king of Britain and conqueror of Rome.<sup>214</sup> Through the depiction of these historical/ mythological architectural monuments the seal assert the continuity between the London of the past and contemporary London.

---

<sup>211</sup> This commonplace book is discussed in C. M. Meale, 'The Compiler at Work: John Colyns and BL MS Harley 2252', in D. Pearsall (ed.), *Manuscripts and Readers in Fifteenth-Century England: The Literary Implications of Manuscript Study. Essays from the 1981 Conference at the University of York* (Cambridge, 1983), pp. 82-103. For a discussion of the commonplace book and the London mercantile community see C. M. Meale, 'The Libelle of Englyshe Polycye and Mercantile Literary Culture in Late-Medieval London' in Boffey and King (eds.), *London and Europe*, pp. 198-226. The commonplace book, which is thought to have belonged to a London mayor, contains, amongst other items, a list of the parish churches of London, the Assize of Bread and Ale, and a Chronicle of London which makes several references to concerns regarding food provisioning in the city and food prices: Gairdner (ed.), *The Historical Collections of a Citizen of London*. Ganim notes that John Stow is obsessively detailed about the costs of foodstuffs in his *Survey*: Ganim, 'The Experience of Modernity', p. 89.

<sup>212</sup> Around the obverse of the seal is inscribed: 'SIGILLUM BARONVM LONDONIARUM'; the 'barons' are the citizens of London. The earliest reference to the common seal of London is 1219, although it is likely that the city possessed a seal from the end of the twelfth century: J. Tait, *The Medieval English Borough: Studies on its Origins* (Manchester, 1936), p. 236. One of these seals is preserved in the Museum of London.

<sup>213</sup> J. Cherry, 'Imago castelli: The Depiction of Castles on Medieval Seals', *Château Gaillard* 15 (1990): 85.

<sup>214</sup> A. Wheatley, 'The Idea of the Castle in Medieval England' (Unpublished PhD Diss., York University), Ch. 2 'The Urban Castle'.



On the reverse of the seal St Thomas Becket is depicted, seated upon a rainbow over a smaller cityscape of London and surrounded by standing figures.<sup>215</sup> The rainbow here is significant because it brings to mind Genesis 9: 8-17, where God instructs Noah to go forth and multiply, giving the same instruction to all living things on the earth. In other words, it is at this point that the earth is turned once again into a place of plenty - a second Eden.<sup>216</sup> More importantly, it is immediately prior to the appearance of the rainbow that God tells Noah that all beasts, birds, fish, and plants will be subservient to man and exist as his food.<sup>217</sup> Thus the presence of the rainbow on the seal can be seen linking London to the new world of plenty promised by God in the Old Testament.<sup>218</sup> However, the nature of the rainbow in Genesis should be remembered: it is a sign of a covenant made between God and man - a legal agreement between the Creator and his creation. Contained within this agreement is the idea of God's authority and the recognition that God's rule once accepted leads to plenty, while rebellion leads to loss.<sup>219</sup> Hence, the rainbow on the London seal would have also served as a pointed reminder of the role of the obedient citizen in the creation of the city as a place of plenty.<sup>220</sup>

If one turns now to the civic buildings that housed the government documents it is possible to see a similar concern to publicise the civic government's role in the upholding of justice and the preservation of a plentiful city. The Guildhall was the seat

---

<sup>215</sup> This side of the seal can also be linked to FitzStephen's *Description*, which formed the preface to FitzStephen's *Life of St Thomas*. St Thomas himself could be associated with the idea of London as a place of plenty, as a hospital with a church dedicated to him was founded in the busy commercial area of Cheap. The Mercers' Company were the patrons of this hospital, and they had their hall in its immediate vicinity. The hospital of St Thomas was further linked with the market as its bell was used to mark the close of some of the open markets on Cornhill and Cheap: J. Watney, *Some Account of the Hospital of St Thomas of Acon in the Cheap, London, and of the Plate of the Mercers' Company* (London, 1906), pp. 11, 17. The church was also involved in the ceremonies surrounding the inauguration of the new mayor, for on this day the mayor and aldermen each offered a penny at St Thomas' Church at the close of the ceremony. It was likewise involved in other ceremonial events of the civic government throughout the year: *ibid.*, pp. 18-19; Riley (ed.), *Liber albus*, p. 24.

<sup>216</sup> The rainbow also refers to the rainbow of Revelations, thus gesturing towards the New Jerusalem, which is also a kind of second Eden. The link between London and the New Jerusalem was often played upon in royal entries to cities during the Middle Ages. I discuss this in Chapter 4.

<sup>217</sup> Genesis 9: 2-3.

<sup>218</sup> It was usual to depict ships and water on the seals of town with ports, thus emphasising their status as a locus of trade. The medieval seal of Bristol gives a clear indication of the role of its port in the provision of food for the city by depicting large eel, a relatively expensive fish, in the water on its seal: P. D. A. Harvey and A. McGuinness, *A Guide to British Medieval Seals* (London, 1996), p. 109.

<sup>219</sup> I am grateful to Revd. Canon K. Punshon for his advice on this matter.

<sup>220</sup> For a discussion of the signifying potential of seals see, B. Bedos-Rezak, 'Towns and Seals: Representation and Signification in Medieval France', in B. Pullen and S. Reynolds (eds.), *Towns and Townspeople in Medieval and Renaissance Europe: Essays in Memory of J. K. Hyde*, Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester 72 (1990): 35-48.



of civic authority and the place to which the trade guilds (including victuallers) came to register their officials and ordinances; it was the place to which those who felt they had been mistreated in some way by traders came to report their complaints; and it was the place that accused traders came to be judged and have sentence pronounced. It was rebuilt in 1411 and Caroline Barron suggests that apart from Old St Paul's it must have been not only the largest but also the finest building in late-medieval London;<sup>221</sup> the hall itself is thought to have been built in emulation of the seat of royal justice, Westminster Hall.<sup>222</sup> Thus, the Guildhall must have worked very efficiently as an embodiment of civic government's power. More specifically, it can be seen as embodying the civic concept of justice. The porch, unfortunately no longer extant, resembled church porches of the period, containing canopied niches for statues. In the central niche at the top was a figure of Christ in majesty; below him were two male figures representing Law and Learning; and at the lowest level, flanking the wide doorway, were four female figures portraying Discipline, Justice, Fortitude and Temperance, each of them trampling a conquered vice.<sup>223</sup> It was this porch that represented the public face of the Guildhall and through which visitors would enter to transact business with the civic officials. Hence, anyone entering the Guildhall would immediately be reminded of the civic government's view of justice and the role of the Guildhall in the judicial process. Perhaps the victuallers might have particularly noted the figure of Temperance, who was the traditional oppressor of gluttony and excess.<sup>224</sup> On a more practical level, the victuallers would have felt a particular link with the magnificence of the Guildhall and its judicial symbolism because fines from their offences went directly into its construction.<sup>225</sup>

Simultaneously with the rebuilding of the Guildhall came the elaboration of civic ceremonial surrounding the election of the new mayor. For example, from 1406 Mass was celebrated in the Guildhall chapel prior to the election of the new mayor, a change which may have influenced the decision to rebuild the chapel in 1430.<sup>226</sup> The linking of the election of the mayor with the chapel might well have been in imitation of

---

<sup>221</sup> C. Barron, *The Medieval Guildhall of London*, p. 26.

<sup>222</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 28.

<sup>223</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 26-27.

<sup>224</sup> A. Katzenellenbogen, *Allegories of the Virtues and Vices in Medieval Art from Early Christian Times to the Thirteenth Century* (London, 1939), pp. 11, 55. These figures are now housed in the Museum of London; the figure being crushed by Temperance is completely unidentifiable as this statue is the most worn of the four. I discuss ideas of gluttony and temperance in the next chapter.

<sup>225</sup> Barron, *Medieval Guildhall*, p. 32.

<sup>226</sup> Riley (ed.), *Memorials*, p. 565; Barron, *Medieval Guildhall*, p. 35.



the ecclesiastical involvement in the coronations of kings, and thus have served to acquire some illusion of divine ratification to the electoral process and subsequently to the mayor's judicial decisions. Equally important in ideological terms is that fact that shortly following election, it was traditional for the new mayor to make his Grand Proclamation regarding the keeping of the peace in the city, keeping the streets clean, and legislation regarding the victualling industry (including the prices that they could charge and instructions to maintain a high quality of product).<sup>227</sup> Thus, directly on entering office the mayor confirmed himself as part of a civic government that saw its prime concerns as being to conserve London as a place of peace, justice, and abundance in victuals.

Thus, I think it is clear that at the heart of civic ideology in the later Middle Ages ~~there~~ is a concern with the presentation of the city as a place of plenty. This conception of London is in evidence by the end of the twelfth century, when FitzStephen wrote his laudatory description of London and when the 'seal of the barons' came into use, and is developed throughout the medieval period, as is evidenced by civic legislation and the presence of food legislation and representations of the city in collections of textual material belonging to London citizens. The city market is constructed as a consumer's paradise where a vast range of high quality products can be purchased.<sup>228</sup> This concept of a consumer's paradise is constructed, perpetuated, and reflected in civic food legislation. In 1412 when an ordinance was issued prescribing the mode by which eels might be sold, it began by praising the virtues of the civic governors and their single-minded intention of increasing the public wealth [*re publica augmentandi*]. It went on to stress the importance of victuals to the city and then complained about foreign eelmongers wrongly charging customers for eels. To counter this it recommended that

---

<sup>227</sup> See, for example, *CLBG*, p. 33. For an example of the kind of victualling material contained in these mayoral proclamations see, Riley (ed.), *Memorials*, pp. 388-90. It would appear to have been the usual practice in cities for the mayor to make a proclamation detailing such issues. See, for example, the proclamation delivered by the Mayor of Coventry, John Leeder, in 1421, Harris (ed.), *The Coventry Leet Book*, pp. 23-33. About two-thirds of the articles covered by this proclamation are concerned with food provisioning.

<sup>228</sup> From the Letter Books it is clear that the civic government was concerned not only with the idea of London as the place of plentiful food. Civic legislation also aimed to ensure the provision, for example, of a range of high-quality textile products. This chapter focuses primarily on London as considerably more evidence is extant for medieval London than York. However, I think that the situation in London is fundamentally the same as that in York, but on a larger scale. For example, York also showed concern and reverence for the documents produced by its own civic government, as is evidenced by the fact that one such official document was to remain perpetually at the sheriff's right hand during official proceedings, as a symbol of the source of his authority. York also showed a respect for its market places, as is demonstrated by the erection of a market cross in 1421 in the Thursday Market: *YMB*, 2: 100.

<sup>228</sup> Riley (ed.), *Memorials*, pp. 580-81; *CLBI*, pp. 101-2.



eels should thenceforth be sold by weight.<sup>229</sup> This legislation clearly incorporates the idea of London as the place of both justice and a plentiful food supply, as a result of the careful and deliberate administration by its civic government. One might even imagine that such legislation arose directly from the perceived disparity between the ideal presented in FitzStephen's *Description* and the reality of fraudulent victualling practices.

Although historians in the past have thought that London did not exist as a centre of consumerism until the early modern period, it is now generally accepted that the roots of consumerism lie in the Middle Ages.<sup>230</sup> Thus historians' opinions now agree with those of the inhabitants of medieval London. Even those medieval texts that criticise the practices and values of London life, such as *Wynnere and Wastoure* and the 'London Lickpenny', also seem to celebrate its wealth of choice and abundance. Although the narrator of the 'London Lickpenny' may lament the fact that for the 'lacke of money' he 'myght not spede', the text itself is laden down with consumables, such as 'fine felt hatts', 'spectacles', 'good brede, ale, and wyne', 'Rybbes of befe', 'Hot pescods', and 'strawbery rype'.<sup>231</sup> Despite their narrator's declared disapproval, the poem becomes an advertisement for London's markets, and a grudging admiration shines through for the choice and wealth of produce. Although there is a general acceptance by modern historians of London as a centre of consumerism, the tendency is to see that market primarily in terms of durable goods such as ceramics, textiles, and jewellery. It is clear, however, from the evidence in this chapter that food was perceived as an equally important matter of choice in the city. For example the Pastons saw London as the place to go to buy a not only a fashionable hat and decorative silks, but also luxury consumables such as sugar, cinnamon, oranges, and almonds.<sup>232</sup> Likewise, the Stonors saw London as the place to purchase fish and spices as well as a wedding gown, brasses, and clothes.<sup>233</sup> Thus far the presentation of the city as a land of plenty has been a neglected chapter in the history of consumerism.

<sup>229</sup> CLRO, Letter-Book I, fol. cxi; *CLBI*, pp. 101-2; Riley (ed.), *Memorials*, pp. 580-81.

<sup>230</sup> For example, Derek Keene describes London in the twelfth century as focal point for the sale of luxury goods: D. Keene, 'London from the Post-Roman Period to 1300', in Palliser (ed.), *The Cambridge Urban History of Britain*, pp. 199-200.

<sup>231</sup> Dean (ed.), *Medieval English Political Writings*, pp. 223-25.

<sup>232</sup> C. Richmond, 'The Pastons and London', in S. Rees Jones, R. Marks, and A. J. Minnis (eds.), *Courts and Regions in Medieval Europe* (Woodbridge, 2000), pp. 211, 212, 225.

<sup>233</sup> C. Carpenter, *Kingsford's Stonor Letters and Papers 1290-1483* (Cambridge, 1996), pp. 201, 261.



I opened this discussion of civic food legislation with ideas concerning the responsibilities of urban governments to provide their inhabitants with the necessities of life in order to ensure a peaceful and happy city. Through an examination of some of the materials of civic government I have uncovered an interest not so much in necessity, although it has its part to play, but rather with plenty. At the beginning of this chapter I quoted a passage from Passus I of *Piers Plowman*, which stated that for an individual to be able to fulfil his spiritual duties he must have sufficient clothing, food, and drink. I shall now complete the quotation: ‘ac do noght out of reson,/ That thow worthe the wers whan thow werche sholdest’.<sup>234</sup> In the next chapter I shall explore precisely this idea of over-consumption and examine some of the spiritual implications arising from living in a city of plenty.

---

<sup>234</sup> Langland, *Piers Plowman*, p. 15, ll. 25-26.



## Excess: The Church's View of Food

### Introduction

The so-called 'Apology for English Gluttony', written during the reign of Henry VIII, refers to Englishmen as the 'grettyste fedours in the worlde', suggesting that a single Englishman 'wolde ete more then vj. of another nacyoun'.<sup>1</sup> The three reasons given for this are a desire to be hospitable and to give all guests the food they crave, to fit in with medical requirements which prescribe different foods for different maladies, and a fear of the over-abundant supply of food in the country: 'we have so grete abowndance and plente in ower realme, yf that we shulde not kyll and dystroye them, they wolde dystroy and devoure us, bothe beste and fowles'.<sup>2</sup> This apparent over-eating is presented as an issue of national pride; as was observed in the previous chapter in the civic ideology of plenty, the whole nation here is presented as a second Eden in which its inhabitants can indulge their appetites to the limit. Yet, as can be seen by the title given to the text by its modern editors, such massive consumption is not always viewed in a positive light. A utopian land of plenty might just as easily be perceived as a home to gluttony as a heavenly paradise.

In the previous chapter it was shown how ideas concerning the provision of bodily necessities quickly slid into ideas concerning the notion of plenty, and plenty, as I shall demonstrate, could have an ambivalent status. Although the medieval city might contrive to present itself as the place of limitless abundance of food, the medieval Church constructed the negative side of plentifulness as the deadly sin of gluttony.<sup>3</sup> On the individual level it was easy to go beyond the satisfaction of bodily needs into excess: 'þat þynge þat began wip nedfulnesse makeþ hit to ende in synne'.<sup>4</sup> Within necessity

---

<sup>1</sup> T. Wright and J. O. Halliwell (eds.), *Reliquiae antiquae: Scraps from Ancient Manuscripts, Illustrating Chiefly Early English Literature and the English Language* (1841; repr. New York, 1966), 1: 326.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 327.

<sup>3</sup> The so-called seven deadly sins are not truly "deadly" (i.e. mortal and leading inevitably to damnation) but rather "cardinal" (i.e. chief or most important) sins. The confusion arose in the Middle Ages in confessional practice: M. W. Bloomfield, *The Seven Deadly Sins: An Introduction to the History of a Religious Concept, with Special Reference to Medieval English Literature* (Michigan, 1952), p. 43. Bloomfield's work is still the standard on the seven deadly sins. Individual studies have been made on some of the deadly sins: S. Wenzel, *The Sin of Sloth: Acedia in Medieval Thought and Literature* (Durham, N. C., 1960); R. Newhauser, *The Early History of Greed: The Sin of Avarice in Early Medieval Thought and Literature* (Cambridge, 2000). There is no full-length study of gluttony. A short study of the subject has been made in W. I. Miller, 'Gluttony', *Representations* 60 (1997): 92-112.

<sup>4</sup> F. M. Diekstra (ed.), *Book for a Simple and Devout Woman: A Late Middle English Adaptation of Peraldus' Summa de vitiis et virtutibus and Friar Laurent's Somme le roi* (Groningen, 1998), p. 249. This text is extant in incomplete forms in two manuscripts. Its authorship and provenance are unknown. A seventeenth-century hand in one of the manuscripts attributes its authorship to the York Augustinian Friar, John Waldeby: *ibid.*, p. 7. Its date of composition is thought to be c. 1400: *ibid.*, p. 51.



itself there seems to be an in-built snare for mankind. The early fifteenth-century sermon series, *Jacob's Well*, points out that food and drink of itself is not harmful, merely man's appetite: 'þe synne is noȝt in þe mete, ne in þe drynke, but in þe apetyte & in þe talent þerof, whan þi delyȝt is out of mesure þerin'.<sup>5</sup> Medieval people, in theory at least, had to tread a fine line in order not to fall into sin and had to be careful to eat no more than was sufficient to satisfy bodily needs: 'Forþi mete and drynke men schulleþ take wiþ drede as medecyne to hele, and þat in mesure, and not to fulfille þe luste'. It was thought that the Devil was able to set traps for mankind hidden within bodily necessity: 'we mow sopliche segge þat we eteþ grenes [snares], we drynkeþ grenes and wiþ grenes we buþ cloped, supþe þulke þinges þat ȝeuen buþ vs to helpe turne to bondis to bynde vs wiþ'.<sup>6</sup> Thus, a common metaphor found in texts discussing gluttony is that of the fish which 'takeþ his mete þat hym nedeþ and wiþ þe mete an hoke he takeþ þat he is taken wiþ'.<sup>7</sup>

Consequently, the civic ideal of plenty examined in the last chapter was not the only food-based utopian vision available to the medieval imagination. The poem, 'The Land of Cokaygne', explores the idea of limitless abundance within a monastic setting. Cokaygne is a land in which there is 'met and drink/ Wiþvte care, how [anxiety], and swink'.<sup>8</sup> Within it there is a 'fair abbei', the walls of which are made of 'pasteiis' and the roof tiles are 'Fluren cakes'.<sup>9</sup> The monks are even so lucky as to have geese flying to

---

<sup>5</sup> A. Brandeis (ed.), *Jacob's Well: An Englisht Treatise on the Cleansing of Man's Conscience Edited from the Unique MS. About 1440 AD in Salisbury Cathedral*, EETS, OS 115 (1900), p. 142, l. 4-6. *Jacob's Well* consists of ninety-five allegorical sermons designed to be delivered in the Easter cycle extending from Ash Wednesday to the Vigil of Pentecost: L. M. Carruthers, 'The Liturgical Setting of *Jacob's Well*', *English Language Notes* 24 (1986-78): 11-24. It is based, to a large extent, on the popular poem the *Speculum vitae* (c. 1360), itself a metrical version of Friar Loren's *Somme le roi* (also known as *Le somme des vices et vertues*) (1279): L. Carruthers, "'Know Thyself': Criticism, Reform and the Audience of *Jacob's Well*", in Hamesse et al. (ed.), *Medieval Sermons and Society: Cloister, City, University* (Louvain-La-Neuve, 1998), p. 219. See also J. Y. Gregg, 'The Exempla of *Jacob's Well*: A Study in the Transmission of Medieval Sermon Stories', *Traditio* 33 (1977): 359-80. *Jacob's Well* also incorporates material from Richard Lavynham's *A Litil Tretys on the Seven Deadly Sins*: L. M. Carruthers, 'Richard Lavyham and the Seven Deadly Sins in *Jacob's Well*', *Fifteenth Century Studies* 18 (1991): 17-32.

<sup>6</sup> Diekstra (ed.), *Book for a Simple and Devout Woman*, pp. 249-50.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 250. See also W. N. Francis (ed.), *The Book of Vices and Virtues: A Fourteenth Century English Translation of Somme le roi of Lorens d'Orleans, Edited from Three Extant Manuscripts*, EETS, OS 217 (1942; repr. 1968), p. 47; J. W. Smeltz (ed.), '*Speculum vitae*: An edition of British Museum Manuscript Royal 17C. viii' (Unpublished PhD Diss., Duquesne University, 1977), p. 592; V. Nelson (ed.), *A Myrour to Lewde men and Wymmen: A Prose Version of the Speculum vitae, Ed. from B. L. MS Harley 45* (Heidelberg, 1981), p. 205.

<sup>8</sup> J. A. W. Bennett and G. V. Smithers (eds.), *Early Middle English Verse and Prose*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. (Oxford, 1968), p. 139, ll. 17-18. Margaret Laing dates the manuscript containing this poem to c. 1330: M. Laing, *Catalogue of Sources for a Linguistic Atlas of Early Medieval English* (Cambridge, 1993), p. 90.

<sup>9</sup> Bennett and Smithers (ed.), *Early Middle English Verse and Prose*, p. 140, ll. 51, 54, 57.



the abbey already ‘irostid on þe spitte’, with the sounds made by these geese mimicking those of the urban food vendor as they cry “‘Gees, al hote, al hote!’”, and they are so well trained as to descend into men’s mouths already delicately spiced.<sup>10</sup> The text is not, however, merely a straightforward celebration of a world made of more food than can be eaten.<sup>11</sup> Embedded within its praise of plenty there is a critique of human practice. The inhabitants described as enjoying this world of plentiful food (and also riches and sexual excess) are monks, who, although not expected to live as ascetics, were required to live a life of austerity.<sup>12</sup> Thus, in this particular context plenty is viewed in a pejorative fashion as sinful excess.

The primary fear surrounding gluttony was that it was a perverted form of religion in itself. The proper way of eating was thought to be in moderation with God in mind all the while.<sup>13</sup> By contrast, the glutton turned his back on God in order to worship his own personal god, the belly. Architectural historians have noted how the layout of the medieval hall reflected that of the parish church, with the high table being equivalent to the altar.<sup>14</sup> Dining could function as the symbolic re-enactment of the Last Supper and be used as a means of social cohesion within the household.<sup>15</sup> This positive model

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 141, l. 102; p. 142, l. 104.

<sup>11</sup> A recent study has been made of medieval Dutch versions of the Cokaygne story, in which the Middle English version of the text is discussed briefly: H. Pleij, *Dreaming of Cockaigne: Medieval Fantasies of the Perfect Life*, trans., D. Webb (New York, 2001). This study is both interesting and suggestive, but its usefulness is limited because of its lack of footnotes

<sup>12</sup> J. McCann (ed. and trans.), *The Rule of Saint Benedict in Latin and English* (London, 1952), pp. 94-99, 124-27. The tendency of those living the monastic life to turn from austerity to excess in their eating practices was frequently satirised in medieval literature. See, for example, Chaucer’s description of the Monk in *The Canterbury Tales*, in which an obsession with food is revealed not only through his passion for hunting, his corpulent stature, and his love of ‘fat swan’, but also by the metaphors and commonplaces used in the description which are linked to food and cooking: Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Riverside Chaucer*, ed. L. D. Benson, 3<sup>rd</sup> edn. (Oxford, 1987), p. 26, ll. 165-207. A more simple and overtly moralising critique of monastic food habits is to found in John Gower, *Mirour de l’omme (The Mirror of Mankind)*, trans. W. B. Wilson (East Lansing, 1992), pp. 278-79.

<sup>13</sup> For example, ‘Forþi þe apostel vs techep how we sholde ete and drynke, þe he þus saiþe *siue comeditis siue bibitis, omnia ad gloriam Dei facite* - “Wheþerso 3e ete or drynke or whatso elles 3e do loke þat warli 3e hit do to þe lowyng [praising] of God”’: Diekstra (ed.), *Book for a Simple and Devout Woman*, p. 250.

<sup>14</sup> See, for example, E. Sandon, *Suffolk Houses: A Study of Domestic Architecture* (Woodbridge, 1977), p. 41; J. Grenville, *Medieval Housing* (London, 1997), p. 90.

<sup>15</sup> The Luttrell Psalter contains illustrations of both the Last Supper and Geoffrey Luttrell at table. The visual resonances between these two scenes clearly show that while one looks at the depiction of Geoffrey at table one is supposed to have in mind the image of the Last Supper. Thus, in his position as head of the household, Geoffrey represents the beneficent, caring, commanding, Christ-like figure: R. K. Emmerson and P. J. P. Goldberg, “‘The Lord Geoffrey had me made’: Lordship and Labour in the Luttrell Psalter”, in J. Bothwell, P. J. P. Goldberg, and W. M. Ormrod (eds.), *The Problem of Labour in Fourteenth-Century England* (Woodbridge, 2000), pp. 52-53. The illustrations of both these scenes are reproduced in *ibid.*, p. 45. I examine idea of social cohesion in the next chapter.



could, however, be perverted through an over-emphasis on dining. For example, the London civic official, Thomas Usk, wrote in *The Testament of Love* (1384-87) of how the glutton lavishes attention on his dining hall whilst allowing the parish church to fall into ruin.<sup>16</sup> Likewise, Winner laments over Waster's 'borde ouerbrade with blasande disches,/ Als it were a rayled rode with rynges and stones'.<sup>17</sup> Winner's dining table has become an altar upon which to worship the appetite. Gluttony causes man to neglect God's call to fast and also God's demand that he rise early to go to church to pray. The glutton's matins become, "A, lord God, what schule we ete to-day? Where schule we fynde any þing þat ouȝt is?"; while his lauds become "A, lord God, we drunken good wyn ȝister-euen and ete good mete".<sup>18</sup> It is my intention in this chapter to examine the origin and forms of gluttony in the Middle Ages, and to consider how the concept of gluttony was disseminated through lay society as a consequence of the episcopal programme of legislation which had the seven deadly sins as one of its central tenets. I shall also consider the role that gluttony may have played within urban society and the urban household.

### **The Origin and Form of the Concept of Gluttony**

By the later Middle Ages the concept of gluttony had a long and remarkably static history. At the beginning of the fourth century the seven deadly sins (at this time numbering eight) took their shape in the deserts of Egypt. The ascetic, Evagrius, was the first orthodox Christian author to consider the sins as a group; for him they functioned initially as an elementary summary for the purposes of everyday examination of conscience and instruction.<sup>19</sup> The sins were the basic evils which threatened the religious life of the ascetic. John Cassian (d. c. 435), who lived and worked in the Egyptian hermit colonies and came to know Evagrius and his teachings, took the sins from the desert into the monastic setting through his *De institutia coenobiorum* and *Collationes*.<sup>20</sup> These texts were ensured popularity within the monastic context as they

---

<sup>16</sup> Thomas Usk, *The Testament of Love*, ed. R. A. Shoaf, TEAMS Middle English Texts (Kalamazoo, 1998), pp. 139-40.

<sup>17</sup> S. Trigg (ed.), *Wynnere and Wastoure*, EETS, OS 297 (1990), p. 12. ll. 342-43. See also S. Wenzel (ed.), *Fasciculus morum: A Fourteenth-Century Preacher's Handbook* (London, 1989), p. 631.

<sup>18</sup> Francis (ed.), *The Book of Vices and Virtues*, p. 47.

<sup>19</sup> A. Vögtle, 'Woher stammt der Schema der Hauptsünden?', *Theologische Quartalschrift* 122 (1941): 237.

<sup>20</sup> Bloomfield, *The Seven Deadly Sins*, pp. 69-72. An English translation Cassian's *Institutia* by C. S. Gibson, is in P. Schaff and H. Wace (eds.), *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn., Vol. 11 (Michigan, 1978), pp. 201-90. Cassian discusses gluttony within the monastic setting in Book 5, pp. 233-45.



were prescribed for monastic study in Chapter 73 of the Benedictine Rule.<sup>21</sup> A century and a half later, Gregory the Great in his *Moralia in Job* discussed the deadly sins in detail, and it was his definition of gluttony which was inherited by the religious writers of the later Middle Ages.<sup>22</sup> Our modern concept of gluttony is relatively simple, being concerned almost exclusively with the idea of over-eating. By contrast, Gregory's gluttony was much more sophisticated. In addition to concerns regarding the quantities of food consumed it encapsulated ideas of the appropriate times of eating, the speed of eating, ideas of enjoyment, and the flavours of the foods to be eaten. This same complexity can be found in late medieval religious texts such as the fourteenth-century pastoral manual, the *Speculum Christiani*:

Fiue fynghers in the hand of glotony be fyue spices of glotony, that be noted in the verse: *Prepropere, laute, nimis, ardentier, studiose*. This menes thus: In etynge and drynkyng bi-for dewe, as to erly; or in vndue tyme, or to ofte and most in fastynge days. Also to delycatly or delyciously in delytynge of swete sauures. And to mych: more than is competent to helth of body, or wher-of the herte or the witte be distoorblede and a-greued ... And wyth to mych desyre in ouermych etyng or deuorynge, as it scheweþ in summe that hasten ouermych and deuoure gredyly mete and drynke for vnmesurable appetyte and out of rule. An wyth to mych and to costlew araynge or dyghtenge [preparation] of metes and drynkes for gret luste of glotonye to be excite. <sup>23</sup>

As a consequence of this broad definition of gluttony a number of eating practices were considered gluttonous in the Middle Ages which would today pass without comment. For example, the beast fable, 'The Fox and the Wolf' (c. 1260), expresses an implicit tension between a man's bodily needs and the demands of the Church. As the human and bestial worlds collide at the close of the poem, the wolf is beaten as a result of its discovery by Friar Ailmer when he goes to the well to get a drink of water during matins.<sup>24</sup> At first glance this incident seems no more complex than a chance happening: the wolf is inadvertently stumbled upon by a friar. The passage takes on more meaning, however, when one takes into account the medieval concept of gluttony. In fact, in drinking the water Ailmer is guilty of the sin of gluttony as he is

<sup>21</sup> McCann (ed.), *The Rule of Saint Benedict*, pp. 160-61.

<sup>22</sup> Gregory the Great, *Moralia in Job*, Lib. XXX Cap. xvii in J. P. Migne (ed.), *Patrologia Latina*, vol. 76 (Turnhout, n.d.), p. 556-557. This text was intended primarily for use by monks, but achieved much wider popularity and can be seen as the chief means by which the sins came to be a part of the general theological and devotional tradition.

<sup>23</sup> G. Holmstedt (ed.), *Speculum Christiani: A Middle English Religious Treatise of the Fourteenth Century*, EETS, OS 182 (1933; repr. 1971), p. 224.

<sup>24</sup> Bennett and Smithers (eds.), *Early Middle English Verse and Prose*, pp. 75-76, ll. 257-95.



drinking at an inappropriate time. The significance of this gluttonous outburst lies in part in the fact that Ailmer is a member of a religious household. More important, however, is the fact that he is also the friar responsible for keeping the ecclesiastical hours and ensuring that all the other brothers are woken to attend the services; this fall into gluttony by the guardian of Church time reveals the call of bodily time to be more powerful than ecclesiastical duties. In effect, the draw of man's bodily needs are shown to override the demands of the Church. In a text which has animals as its main characters this must surely gesture towards an elision of animal and human. Thus, the beating of the wolf (referred to as 'þe deuel') which immediately follows this incident can be seen as a metaphorical chastising of that bestial part of man's nature which turns it back on Christian morality.<sup>25</sup> The medieval definition of gluttony can also shed light on another odd story in the *Alphabet of Tales*.<sup>26</sup> In this tale 'a holie mayden' strolls in the convent garden where she picks a lettuce leaf and eats it without first saying grace.<sup>27</sup> As a consequence of this action she becomes possessed by a demon, who happened to be sitting upon the leaf, and is saved only by the intervention of a passing holy man who exorcises the demon.<sup>28</sup> The seemingly innocuous actions of this 'holie mayden', like those of Ailmer, can be construed as gluttonous: in failing to say grace before eating the lettuce leaf which she has plucked in the garden the 'holie mayden' is guilty of eating both over-hastily and at the wrong time.<sup>29</sup> Gregory's detailed definition of gluttony could result in the individual easily falling into sin.

---

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 76, l. 282. It is undoubtedly also significant that as well as being the keeper of the ecclesiastical hours, Ailmer is also 'maister curtiler' (master gardener) and thus involved in producing food for the house. Hence, in Ailmer's dual functions within the household as food producer (provider for the body) and religious time-keeper (provider for the soul) there is an inevitable tension: *ibid.*, p. 76, l. 272.

<sup>26</sup> This a fifteenth-century Middle-English translation of the *Alphabetum narrationum* (c. 1307), a collection of about eight-hundred tales, narrated under alphabetised topic headings and a popular source of sermon *exempla*: J. Y. Gregg, 'The Exempla of Jacob's Well: A Study in the Transmission of Medieval Sermon Stories', *Traditio* 33 (1977): 361-62.

<sup>27</sup> M. M. Banks (ed.), *An Alphabet of Tales: An English 15<sup>th</sup> Century Translation of the Alphabetum narrationum of Etienne de Besançon from Additional MS 25,719 of the British Museum*, EETS, OS 126, 127 (1904-5), p. 78.

<sup>28</sup> This story is also to be found in Caxton's *Golden Legend* (1493), in which the holy man is described as 'saynt Equycyen': Richard Morris (ed.), *Legends of the Holy Rood, Symbols of the Passion and Cross-Poems in Old English of the Eleventh, Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries*, EETS, OS 46 (1881, repr. 1969), p. 169.

<sup>29</sup> The underlying message of this text is clearly that all food, even the innocent lettuce leaf is potentially damaging to the soul unless constrained within a religious framework. It is interesting that lettuce was chosen in this tale as lettuce was perceived by medical writers as having the effect of reducing one's libido and ensuring chastity. See, for example, F. Umberkircher, *Tacuinum sanitatis in medicina: Codex Vindoboniensis Series Nova 2644 of the Austrian Library. Commentary to the Facsimile Edition*, trans. H. Saxer and C. H. Talbot (London, 1968), p. 57; F. J. Furnivall (ed.), *Andrew Boorde's Introduction and Dyetary with Barnes in the Defence of a Berde*, EETS, ES 10 (1870; repr. 1973). Thus, even this "medicinally virtuous" food is a potential source of harm to the soul.



Not only did Gregory the Great set the definitions of the seven deadly sins as they were to appear throughout the Middle Ages, he also gave them their order. When the list of deadly sins had been compiled in the fourth century in the deserts of Egypt, gluttony headed the list, because the list being compiled by ascetics who found “over-eating” a particularly difficult vice to give up and consequently perhaps spent an inordinate amount of time thinking about food.<sup>30</sup> When the sins were transferred from the desert to the monastery by Cassian it remained at the top of the list. It was Gregory who moved pride to the head of the list and located gluttony towards the end of the list along with lechery.<sup>31</sup> During the medieval period there was a degree of jockeying for position between pride and avarice, as result of changes in secular society, but pride maintained its place at the head of the list, where it still tends to be seen today.<sup>32</sup> The location of gluttony towards the bottom of the list of sins has tended to cause modern scholars to assume that gluttony was not regarded as a particularly serious or influential sin in the Middle Ages.<sup>33</sup> However, not only did gluttony fall into the category of the seven deadly sins, it also fell into the category of the three temptations.

In the Middle Ages it was thought that from the moment that fallen man was born he was troubled by the lures of the flesh, the world and the devil.<sup>34</sup> These temptations were, according to 1 John 2:16, lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and pride of life.<sup>35</sup> This was linked in the first instance to the Fall itself. In an homily on the Fall of Man, Gregory the Great suggested that Satan tempted Adam and Eve with three temptations: gluttony (eating the apple), vainglory (you shall be as gods), and avarice (knowledge of good and evil, i.e. power).<sup>36</sup> This idea gained popular currency and appears in, amongst other texts, Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales*. Chaucer’s Pardoner

---

<sup>30</sup> Siegfried Wenzel suggests that the order of Evagrius and Cassian represents a process of concatenation. In other words, from abundance of the first vice springs the second. Thus the monk or hermit who gives in to gluttony will succumb to lechery. Likewise, the monk or hermit who has withdrawn from the world in order to conquer the vices and promote virtues will have to conquer the vices in the right order, i.e. gluttony, lechery, etc.: S. Wenzel, ‘The Seven Deadly Sins: Some Problems of Research’, *Speculum* 43 (1968): 4.

<sup>31</sup> Bloomfield, *The Seven Deadly Sins*, p. 72.

<sup>32</sup> L. K. Little, ‘Pride Goes Before Avarice: Social Change and the Vices in Latin Christendom’, *American Historical Review* 76 (1971): 16-59.

<sup>33</sup> See, for example, J. Bossy, *Christianity in the West, 1400-1700* (Oxford, 1985), p. 35.

<sup>34</sup> The idea of the three temptations found its way into much religious and secular literature. They were dramatised in both *The Castle of Perseverance* and *Mary Magdalen*: M. Eccles (ed.), *The Macro Plays: The Castle of Perseverance, Wisdom and Mankind*, EETS, OS 262 (1969), pp. 1-111; D. C. Baker, J. L. Murphy, and L. B. Hall, Jr. (eds.), *The Late Medieval Religious Plays of Bodleian MSS Digby 133 and E Museo 160*, EETS, OS 283 (1982), pp. 24-95.

<sup>35</sup> D. R. Howard, *The Three Temptations: Medieval Man in Search of the World* (Princeton, 1966), p. 43. See also S. Wenzel, ‘The Three Enemies of Man’, *Mediaeval Studies* 29 (1967): 47-66.

<sup>36</sup> Howard, *The Three Temptations*, p. 44.



put the blame for the expulsion from Eden on Adam's gluttony, declaring, 'O glotonye, on thee wel oghte us pleyne!'.<sup>37</sup> He suggests that Adam was 'in Paradys' while he 'fasted'.<sup>38</sup> This was echoed in many other medieval texts, including Chaucer's 'The Parson's Tale', Gower's *Confessio Amantis* and *Mirour de l'omme*, and *Jacob's Well*.<sup>39</sup> The three temptations of Adam and Eve in Eden were mirrored by those of Christ in the wilderness, where he was tempted by Satan to make bread out of stone, to jump from the tower, and to survey all the kingdoms of the world. These Gregory similarly associated with gluttony, vainglory, and avarice.<sup>40</sup> Thus 'þe fende' was accused in medieval literature of having used gluttony to tempt 'Adam in paradise and Godis son Ihesu Criste here in erþe'.<sup>41</sup> As gluttony was seen to be implicated in both the Fall of Man and the temptations of Christ in the wilderness, it is unlikely that it was regarded, at least by theologians, in an overly benign light.

Some medieval texts also attributed the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah to gluttony. For example, a Middle English adaptation of the *Somme le roi* and the *Summa vitiis et virtutibus* claims that Sodom and Gomorrah fell into 'so lodliche synne' because 'þei eten ouermyche brede'.<sup>42</sup> The reason that such biblical disasters were attributed to gluttony was the belief that gluttony was the root of other sins: the individual who succumbed to gluttony would soon fall prey to the other sins. As Chaucer's Parson points out, 'He that is usaunt to this synne of glotonye, he ne may no synne withstonde. He moot been in servage of alle vices, for it is the develes hoord there he hideth hym and resteth'.<sup>43</sup> Gluttony was perceived as the particular tool of the Devil and the means by which he ensnared man's soul through the other sins. Gluttony was the 'gate of synnes, be þe whiche alle opere synnes entryn in-to man'.<sup>44</sup> Gower in the *Mirour de l'omme* accuses Gluttony of stirring up the other vices and keeping them active so that they can never amend their ways. He suggests that Gluttony controls the government of

<sup>37</sup> Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Riverside Chaucer*, ed. L. D. Benson, 3<sup>rd</sup> edn. (Oxford, 1987), p. 197, l. 512.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 197, ll. 508-9.

<sup>39</sup> Chaucer, *Riverside Chaucer*, p. 316, l. 818; John Gower, *The Complete Works of John Gower: Edited from the Manuscripts with Introductions, Notes and Glossaries. Vol. 3: The English Works: Confessio Amantis, Lib. V. 1971-Lib. VIII: and In Praise of Peace*, ed. G. C. Macaulay (1901; repr. Michigan, 1968), 167; Gower, *The Complete Works ... Vol. 1: The French Works*, ed. G. C. Macaulay (1889; repr. Michigan, 1968), p. 100; Gower, *Mirour de l'omme*, p. 118; Brandeis (ed.), *Jacob's Well*, p. 141, ll. 19-20.

<sup>40</sup> Howard, *The Three Temptations*, p. 49.

<sup>41</sup> Diekstra (ed.), *Book for a Simple and Devout Woman*, p. 249.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 260.

<sup>43</sup> Chaucer, *Riverside Chaucer*, p. 316, l. 820.

<sup>44</sup> Brandeis (ed.), *Jacob's Well*, p. 145.



foolish human life because she leads and directs all the other vices.<sup>45</sup> Gluttony is depicted as the sin which seems, on the surface, trivial and yet can have disastrous consequences for a man's soul:

O, wiste a man how manye maladyes  
 Folowen of excesse and of glotonyes,  
 He wolde been the moore mesurable  
 Of his diete, sittynge at his table.<sup>46</sup>

Thus, in many medieval texts gluttony was seen as the root and cause of numerous other sins and vices. Two sins which were particularly associated with gluttony were blasphemy and lechery. Gluttony was associated with blasphemy because in the thirteenth century the French Dominican Guillaume Peyraut (William Peraldus) added an eighth sin, the sin of the tongue.<sup>47</sup> Thus, those texts based upon his enormously popular *Summa de vitiis et virtutibus* subdivided the sins of the mouth into sins of the teeth and taste (gluttony) and sins of the tongue (blasphemy etc.). Hence, in texts such as the *Book for a Simple and Devout Woman* and the fourteenth-century metrical *Speculum vitae*, following the discussion of gluttony and its offspring, there is a section devoted to sins of speech, including lying, blasphemy, gossiping, boasting, complaining, and slandering.<sup>48</sup> It has even been suggested that by such a means gluttony became connected with witchcraft and devil worship.<sup>49</sup>

---

<sup>45</sup> 'Tout autrecy comme la norrice/ Par son laitier l'enfant cherice,/ Si fait ma dame Gloutenie:/ Tous les peccés moet et entice/ Et maintient du fol excercice,/ Q'amender ne se pourront mye:/ Car de l'umaine fole vie/ Tient Gule la connestablie,/ Comme cil qui sur tout autre vice/ Conduit et l'avantgarde guye,/ Et tous suient sa compaignie/ Chascun endroit de son office': Gower, *The Complete Works ... Vol. 1: The French Works*, p. 99, ll. 8509-20; 'Just as a nurse, by her nursing, endears her to a child, so does Lady Gluttony; she moves and stirs up all the sins and keeps them in mad activities so that they can never amend at all. Gluttony holds the governance of foolish human life, as the one who leads all other vices and guides the vanguard; and they follow her lead, each according to her office': Gower, *Mirour de l'omme*, pp. 117-18.

<sup>46</sup> Chaucer, *Riverside Chaucer*, p. 197, ll. 513-16.

<sup>47</sup> Bloomfield, *The Seven Deadly Sins*, p. 124. A discussion of Peraldus' section on *peccatum lingue* in his *Summa de vitiis et virtutibus*, particularly in relation to *Piers Plowman*, can be found in J. H. Blythe, 'Sins of the Tongue and Rhetorical Prudence in *Piers Plowman*', in R. G. Newhauser and John A. Alford (eds.), *Literature and Religion in the Later Middle Ages: Philological Studies in Honor of Siegfried Wenzel* (New York, 1995), pp. 119-42.

<sup>48</sup> Diekstra (ed.), *Book for a Simple and Devout Woman*, pp. 262-299. Smeltz (ed.), '*Speculum vitae*', pp. 613-654. The *Speculum vitae* was written by the York lawyer William Nassington, who was chancellor to Archbishop Zouche. It is extant in thirty-eight manuscripts: J. Hughes, 'The Administration of Confession in the Diocese of York in the Fourteenth Century', in D. M. Smith (ed.), *Studies in Clergy and Ministry in Medieval England: Purvis Seminar Studies*, Borthwick Studies in History 1 (York, 1991), pp. 97-99. A prose version was produced in the second half of the fourteenth century. This prose version, extant in four manuscripts, is edited in Nelson (ed.), *A Mirour to Lewde Men and Wymmen*. The section on sins of speech is on pp. 211-221.

<sup>49</sup> R. F. Yeager, 'Aspects of Gluttony in Chaucer and Gower', *Studies in Philology* 81 (1984): 42-55.



Gluttony came to be associated with lechery because they were both sins of the flesh.<sup>50</sup> Moreover, there was a belief that gluttonous eating could lead directly to lecherous acts. As was shown in Chapter 1, certain foods were to be avoided, particularly by monastics, owing to their tendency to stir the individual to sexual acts. This connection between gluttony and lechery was linked back to the Bible through the belief that Eve and Adam first ate the apple through gluttony and were then stirred to lechery. The fourteenth-century preacher's manual, *Fasciculus morum*, drawing on Jerome, noted that for so long as Eve was abstinent in her eating practices she remained a virgin, but as soon as she ate the apple she experienced lechery.<sup>51</sup> As a result there was some cross-over between terms associated with gluttony and those associated with lechery. For example, 'likerous' in the *Middle English Dictionary* means both 'lascivious, amorous, and lecherous' and 'gluttonous, excessively fond of luxurious food or drink, and greedy'.<sup>52</sup> Thus, when Chaucer's Wife of Bath wishes to express the link between excessive consumption of wine and a tendency to promiscuity, she is able to declare quite succinctly that 'A likerous mouth moste han a likerous tayl'.<sup>53</sup>

### Gluttony and the Laity

Despite gluttony's lowly position in the scheme of the seven deadly sins it was perceived by theologians as having a serious status because it was also one of the three temptations and was seen as the gateway through which man might be drawn into other sins. To what extent, however, can the eating practices of the laity be seen as being influenced by the thinking of the Church? At the most basic level, the everyday lives of individuals were organised around the liturgical calendar, which marked out the year with a succession of fasts. In each week there were three fast days on which the laity were expected to abstain from eating meat: Friday, the most strictly observed, in memory of the crucifixion; Wednesday, the day on which Judas accepted money to betray Jesus; and Saturday, the day consecrated to Mary and the celebration of her virginity.<sup>54</sup> Fasting was given special emphasis on Ember Days and also throughout

<sup>50</sup> Chaucer's Parson refers to gluttony and lechery as 'cosyns': Chaucer, *Riverside Chaucer*, p. 317, l. 836.

<sup>51</sup> Wenzel (ed.), *Fasciculus morum*, p. 630.

<sup>52</sup> S. M. Kuhn and J. Reidy (eds.), *Middle English Dictionary* (Ann Arbor, 1975), vol. 5.

<sup>53</sup> Chaucer, *Riverside Chaucer*, p. 111, l. 466.

<sup>54</sup> B. A. Henisch, *Fast and Feast: Food in Medieval Society* (London, 1976), pp. 29-30. That the laity tended to observe the Friday fast but not those of Wednesday and Saturday is evidenced by *Pierce the Ploughman's Crede*. In this text Pierce fears that the punishment that will be exacted upon him by his confessor for not knowing the Creed will be enforced fasting on Wednesdays as well as Fridays: H. Barr (ed.), *Pierce the Ploughman's Crede* (London, 1993), p. 61, l. 13. For an examination of actual fasting



Lent, when a wider range of foodstuffs was excluded from the diet.<sup>55</sup> If an individual needed to consume meat during these fasting periods, because of old age or sickness, a licence was required exempting the individual from the Christian fast.<sup>56</sup> The lack of evidence of punishments for breach of the customary abstinence during Lent until the middle of the sixteenth century may suggest that the Church's dietary restrictions were accepted both by butchers and the public without notable complaint.<sup>57</sup> Certainly, the fact that cooking salt pork on the Saturday after Ash Wednesday was amongst the list of sins committed by Margery Baxter of Norwich which resulted in her being accused of Lollardy would seem to confirm a general acceptance of weekly fasts.<sup>58</sup> Similarly, the continuous privations within the period of Advent described in a fifteenth-century carol welcoming the arrival Christmas, suggest that the laity would be accustomed to the unpleasant austerities of prolonged periods of religious fasting:

While thou hast be within oure howse  
We ete no puddynges ne no sowce,  
But stynking fische not worthe a lowce;  
Farewele fro vs both alle and sume.<sup>59</sup>

---

behaviour within some lay medieval aristocratic households see S. Wells, 'The Social Meanings of Food in Later Medieval England', (Unpublished MA Diss., York University, 1999), pp. 51-54.

<sup>55</sup> Hensch, *Fast and Feast*, pp. 30-31. The Church also regulated when foodstuffs could be bought, as the markets and shops could not sell victuals on Sundays except in unusual circumstances: R. H. Britnell, *The Commercialisation of English Society 1000-1500* (Cambridge, 1993), pp. 84-85; L. F. Salzman, *English Trade in the Middle Ages* (Oxford, 1931), pp. 123-36. For examples in actual civic legislation of markets' opening hours being affected by Church hours see *CLBK*, pp. 10 and 198-99; *YMB*, 2: 161, 182-83. For a discussion of the interaction between civic time and church time see G. D. V. Rossum, *History of the Hour: Clocks and Modern Temporal Orders*, trans. T. Dunlap (London, 1996), pp. 202-13. London civic government also interfered regarding the hours at which victuals could be sold on the Midsummer Watch. Proclamations were repeatedly issued forbidding taverners, brewers, pie-bakers, innkeepers, cooks, and hucksters to keep their houses open on the eve of the Midsummer Watch. See, for example, *CLBI*, pp. 86, 93, 103. This was probably intended to emphasise the sanctity of this occasion. For a discussion of the part played by the Midsummer Watch in the demonstration of civic power towards the end of the Middle Ages see S. Lindenbaum, 'Ceremony and Oligarchy: The London Midsummer Watch', in B. A. Hanawalt and K. L. Reyerson (eds.), *City and Spectacle in Medieval Europe* (London, 1994), pp. 171-88.

<sup>56</sup> Philip E. Jones, *The Butchers of London: A History of the Worshipful Company of Butchers of the City of London* (London, 1976), p. 124.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.* In 1499 John Whaplod was charged with eating meat on St Mark's Day: W. Hale (ed.), *A Series of Precedents and Proceedings in Criminal Causes, Extending from the Year 1475 to 1640: Extracted from the Act-Books of the Ecclesiastical Courts in the Diocese of London* (1847; repr. Edinburgh, 1973), p. 69. In 1552 a woman found guilty of breaking Lent through bringing two pigs to Smithfield, along with the man who received the pigs, were condemned to ride on horses through the markets wearing on their heads garlands 'of the pyges pettie toes' and with 'a pygge hanginge on ech of their brestes afore them': Charles Wriothesley, *A Chronicle of England During the Reigns of the Tudors from AD 1485 to 1559. Volume II*, Camden Society, NS 20 (1877), p. 68.

<sup>58</sup> P. J. P. Goldberg (ed. and trans.), *Women in England c. 1275-1525: Documentary Sources* (Manchester, 1995), p. 295. Certainly, the example from the Oxford schoolbook, cited in Chapter 1, suggests that fish was eaten without respite during Lent: W. Nelson (ed.), *A Fifteenth Century School Book* (Oxford, 1956), p. 8.

<sup>59</sup> R. L. Green (ed.), *The Early English Carols*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. (Oxford, 1977), p. 2. Although literature celebrating the 'Battle of Carnival and Lent' is lacking for England, such a tradition evidently existed



Thus, the Church fundamentally influenced the eating habits of the laity on a daily basis.

In addition, secular eating practices may have been affected by the Church's teaching on gluttony as a result of the ubiquity of the seven deadly sins in lay religious instruction. Here I think it is worth taking some time to examine precisely how gluttony and the other sins came to be known in everyday society. From the Fourth Lateran Council onwards parish priests had a clearly defined responsibility for the state of the souls of their parishioners, a responsibility which entailed the instruction of the laity on the nature of sin.<sup>60</sup> Particular emphasis was placed on confession, specifically the diligent searching out of sins, and subsequent documents show that confessors were also expected to cross-examine penitents on their religious knowledge as well as on their sins.<sup>61</sup> The competent performance of the onerous task of confession necessitated the education of both parish priests and the laity. The programme for the instruction of the laity had the seven deadly sins at its heart as they provided the most widely used scheme

---

here, at least on a small scale, as there is a reference to '*Carnilevaria*' in FitzStephen's *Description*: H. T. Riley (ed.), *Minimenta Gildhallae Londoniensis* (London, 1860), 2i: 11. There is also a description of a Shrove Tuesday procession held in Norwich in 1443 in which 'Lenten' is described as 'cladde in white with redde herrings skinned' on a horse 'trapped with oyster shelles' riding 'in diuerse stretes of ye Cite, w<sup>t</sup> other people w<sup>t</sup> hym disgysed making merthe and disporte and pleyes': W. Hudson and J. C. Tingey (eds), *Selected Records of the City of Norwich* (Norwich, 1906), 1: 345-46. Cited incorrectly in F. B. Jonassen, 'Carnival Food Imagery in Chaucer's Description of the Franklin', *Studies in the Age of Chaucer* 16 (1994):104. This article contains a discussion of Continental literature concerning the 'Battle of Carnival and Lent': pp. 103-8. See also T. Scully, *The Art of Cookery in the Middle Ages* (Woodbridge, 1995), pp.62-64; Bossy, *Christianity in the West*, pp. 42-45.

<sup>60</sup> The text of the Fourth Lateran Council can be found in N. P. Tanner (ed.), *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils. Volume 1: Nicaea I to Lateran V* (London, 1990), pp. 230-71.

<sup>61</sup> Canon 21 compares the priest to a skilled and learned doctor who pours oil and wine into the wounds of the injured patient: Tanner (ed.), *Decrees*, p. 245. The idea of the priest as physician was popular both before and after Lateran IV. For its use in early penitentials see J. T. McNeill, 'Medicine for Sin as Prescribed in the Penitentials', *Church History* 1 (1932): 14-26. Perhaps the most consummate description of the ailing soul is provided by Henry of Lancaster in his *Livre des seyntz medicines* (1354), which is laid out in the form of confession. The author lays open his soul's wounds, which are infected by the seven deadly sins, to the Divine Physician. He then prays for remedies for each wound. Towards the end of the text there is a complete elision of the medical and the spiritual when the fevered patient is prescribed water baths, the seeds of pomegranate, and capon broth (for which he gives a recipe). These traditional medical remedies are then allegorised: the water is the blood that flowed from Christ's spear wound; the pomegranate is both Grace and Christ's body with its numerous wounds; and the capon is Christ who sweated blood for the salvation of sinners: E. J. Arnould (ed.), *Le livre de seyntz medicines: The Unpublished Devotional Treatise of Henry of Lancaster* (Oxford, 1940), pp. 194-95, 199-201, 202-3. On the emphasis on confession see W. A. Pantin, *The English Church in the Fourteenth Century* (Notre Dame, 1962), pp. 191-92. On the responsibilities of parish priests see L. E. Boyle, 'The Fourth Lateran Council and Manuals of Popular Theology', in T. J. Heffernan (ed.), *The Popular Literature of Medieval England* (Knoxville, 1985), pp. 31-32. On the continuity of confessional practice before and after Lateran IV see P. Durkin, 'Examining One's Conscience: A Survey of Late Middle English Prose Forms of Confession', *Leeds Studies in English*, NS 28 (1997): 19-56. On the history of confession see M. F. Braswell, *The Medieval Sinner: Characterization and Confession in the Literature of the Middle Ages* (London, 1983). See also T. N. Tentler, *Sin and Confession on the Eve of the Reformation* (Princeton, 1977).



which helped the Christian to search his conscience and the priest to examine his penitents.<sup>62</sup>

In Chapter 2 it was shown how the civic authorities constructed a particular ideology of food within the city by the continuous issuing and re-issuing of food legislation. A similar process can be seen at work in the construction of a popular theological ideology, centred upon the formation of the individual conscience, through the repeated issuing of constitutions by the English bishops at the local level.<sup>63</sup> A number of the bishops made considerable efforts to provide detailed legislation on the elementary theological teaching necessary for the parish priest to carry out his job efficiently.<sup>64</sup> Several of these diocesan statutes mention the seven deadly sins as a topic which must be regularly preached in the parish church. The earliest of these are the statutes of Coventry issued by Alexander of Stavensby, Bishop of Lichfield (1224-37), to which he added a treatise on the seven deadly sins.<sup>65</sup> Similarly, Bishop Grosseteste of Lincoln's statutes (c. 1239) began by commanding the parish priest to expound the ten commandments, the seven deadly sins, the seven sacraments, and the Creed to his parishioners.<sup>66</sup> These statutes were immediately imitated by fellow bishops all over England.<sup>67</sup> By far the best known and probably the most important of the episcopal statutes were, however, Archbishop Pecham's Lambeth Constitutions, issued in 1281.<sup>68</sup> Canon 9, his outline of religious instruction, which is usually known from its *incipit* as *Ignorantia sacerdotum*, circulated widely and was available in English adaptations as

---

<sup>62</sup> S. Wenzel, 'Vices, Virtues and Popular Preaching', in D. B. J. Randall (ed.), *Medieval and Renaissance Studies: Proceedings of the Southeastern Institute of Medieval and Renaissance Studies, Summer 1974* (Durham, N. C., 1976), p. 28; Boyle, 'The Fourth Lateran Council', pp. 30-43.

<sup>63</sup> Most dioceses had networks of distribution for this legislation, which involved priests copying and updating decrees from archdeacons' exemplars. It is thought that this system may have encouraged the development of the clerical miscellany, into which material could be copied as it came to hand: V. Gillespie, 'Vernacular Books of Religion', in J. Griffiths and D. Pearsall (eds.), *Book Production and Publishing in Britain 1375-1475* (Cambridge, 1989), p. 317.

<sup>64</sup> G. H. Russell, 'Vernacular Instruction of the Laity in the Later Middle Ages in England: Some Texts and Notes', *Journal of Religious History* 2 (1962): 98.

<sup>65</sup> F. M. Powicke and C. R. Cheney (eds.), *Councils and Synods with Other Documents Relating to the English Church: II Ad 1205-1313. Part I: 1205-1265* (Oxford, 1964), p. 214.

<sup>66</sup> Wenzel, 'Vices, Virtues and Popular Preaching', pp. 28-29. Grosseteste also wrote the highly influential pastoral work, the *Templum Domini* (1239-46), which is extant in 85 manuscripts: L. E. Boyle, 'Robert Grosseteste and the Pastoral Care', in D. B. J. Randall (ed.), *Medieval and Renaissance Studies: Proceedings of the Southeastern Institute of Medieval and Renaissance Studies, Summer 1976* (Durham, N. C., 1979), pp. 10-11.

<sup>67</sup> Wenzel, 'Vices, Virtues and Popular Preaching', p. 29.

<sup>68</sup> Papal decrees had granted the friars the privilege of hearing confession. Pecham himself was a friar and therefore well aware of the needs of both friar and parish priest: H. G. Pfander, 'Some Medieval Manuals of Religious Instruction in England and Observations on Chaucer's Parson's Tale', *Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 35 (1936): 243-44.



late as the sixteenth century.<sup>69</sup> This commanded that each priest (himself or through a substitute) should expound four times a year simply, in the vernacular, the fourteen articles of faith, the ten commandments, the two precepts of the gospel, the seven works of mercy, the seven deadly sins and their offspring, the seven virtues, and the seven sacraments.<sup>70</sup>

Both the Fourth Lateran Council and these episcopal statutes generated a mass of literature, in both Latin and the vernacular, which had the seven deadly sins as a focal point and was designed both to assist the parish priest in his duties as confessor and preacher, and the lay man or woman in their role as penitent and good Christian.<sup>71</sup> As the instruction provided by the *Ignorantia sacerdotum* was rudimentary, in the fourteenth century manuals began to appear featuring expositions of Pecham's syllabus, which were designed to make the fulfilment of the requirements of the syllabus easier for the parish priest. The first of these, an English-produced Latin text, the *Oculus sacerdotis* (c. 1320), was written by William of Pagula, a parish priest from Berkshire.<sup>72</sup> Its purpose was to embrace all aspects of the cure of the soul to which the parish priest was committed, which it achieved through its focus on confessional practice, sacramental theology, and preaching material.<sup>73</sup> The seven deadly sins play a large part in both the section on confession (*Pars oculi*) and the section on preaching material (*Dextra pars*).<sup>74</sup>

This popular text found an even wider audience when parts of it were translated into the vernacular and found their way into John Mirk's *Instructions for Parish Priests*.<sup>75</sup> This text, written for the non-learned parish priest, advises the priest that his

<sup>69</sup> Russell, 'Vernacular Instruction', p. 98. *Ignorantia sacerdotum* is discussed in detail in D. I. Douie, *Archbishop Pecham* (Oxford, 1952), pp 133-42.

<sup>70</sup> F. M. Powicke and C. R. Cheney (eds.), *Councils and Synods with Other Documents Relating to the English Church: II AD 1205-1313. Part II: 1265-1313* (Oxford, 1964), pp. 900-1.

<sup>71</sup> Some idea of the number of medieval Latin texts written on the vices and virtues can be gained from M. W. Bloomfield et al. (eds.), *Incipits of Latin Works on the Virtues and Vices, 1100-1500 AD: Including a Section of Incipits of Works on the Pater noster* (Cambridge, Mass., 1979). There is no equivalent for Middle English texts but some sense of the volume and range of texts produced can be gathered from R. R. Raymo, 'Works of Religious and Philosophical Instruction', in A. E. Hartung (ed.), *A Manual of Writings in Middle English 1050-1500* (Connecticut, 1986), 7: 2467-2588.

<sup>72</sup> L. E. Boyle, 'The *Oculus sacerdotibus* and Some Other Works of William of Pagula', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 5<sup>th</sup> series 5 (1955): 83.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 84.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 85-90.

<sup>75</sup> The *Oculus* is extant in 56 manuscripts: Hughes, 'The Administration of Confession' History 1, p. 93. On its incorporation into Mirk's *Instructions* see Boyle, 'The *Oculus sacerdotibus*', p. 86; D. B. Foss, 'John Mirk's *Instructions for Parish Priests*', in W. J. Sheils and D. Wood (ed.), *The Ministry: Clerical and Lay*, Studies in Church History 26 (1989), p. 134. The *Instructions* are extant in 7 manuscripts: *ibid.*, p. 135. In fact the *Instructions* are more akin to shorter Latin texts (classified by Goering and Payer as *confessionalia*) which focused on the practical administration of the sacrament of penance, than to the



parishioners should be shriven more than<sup>n</sup> the obligatory once a year at Easter, suggesting that the parishioner should be encouraged to confess his sins immediately ‘Leste he for3et by lentes day’.<sup>76</sup> The section on confession is extensive, covering how the priest should behave in confession towards the penitent, that the priest should examine the religious knowledge of the penitent while in confession, and that he should inquire systematically as to whether the parishioner has sinned against the ten commandments or the seven deadly sins. Each of the sins is covered in depth. The section on gluttony, drawing on Gregory’s definition, asks the penitent whether he has eaten so much that he has made himself sick, and if so has he vomited up the sacrament; it inquires whether he has been drunk or whether through malice or ignorance he has caused another to become drunk; whether he has kept the Church’s fasts; it asks whether he has eaten more than was necessary to satisfy need, or eaten too early or too late, or of food too delicate; it concludes by asking whether the penitent has stolen any food or drink.<sup>77</sup> The section which discusses the imposition of penances, as well as recommending the kind of penances which should be applied to the different sins, also requires the confessor to inquire into the circumstances of the sinner and the sin: *quis, quid, ubi, per quos, quociens, quomodo, quando*.<sup>78</sup>

In other words, the sins occupy an extremely large part in what this particular manual sees as the duties of the parish priest. The same is also true of the more influential *Lay Folk’s Catechism*, based on an injunction (1357) of John Thoresby, Archbishop of York.<sup>79</sup> Like the *Instructions*, it spends a great deal of time on matters such as the ten commandments and the seven deadly sins, those things by which the

---

highly theoretical *Oculus*: J. Goering and P. J. Payer, ‘The *Summa penitentia fratrum predicatorum*: A Thirteenth Century Confessional Formulary’, *Mediaeval Studies* 55 (1933): 3.

<sup>76</sup> E. Peacock (ed.), *Instructions for Parish Priest’s by John Myrc. Edited from Cotton MS. Claudius A. II*, EETS, OS 31 (1868), p. 1, ll. 13-19, p. 3, l. 75.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 40-41. The confessor is instructed to enquire equally carefully about venial sins.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 47-51. For a consideration of the growing importance the degrees of consent in the imposition of penance see D. W. Robertson, Jr., ‘The Cultural Tradition of *Handlyng Synne*’, *Speculum* 22 (1947): 170-72.

<sup>79</sup> This Latin injunction concerns the improvement of sacerdotal instruction of the laity, and is clearly based on Pecham’s syllabus: Pantin, *The English Church*, pp. 211-12. Pecham’s syllabus also circulated in other vernacular forms. See, for example, P. Hodgson, ‘*Ignorancia sacerdotum*: A Fifteenth-Century Discourse on the Lambeth Constitutions’, *Review of English Studies* 24 (1948): 1-11. On the content and intentions of the Middle English version of Thoresby’s injunctions see A. Hudson, ‘A New Look at *The Lay Folks’ Catechism*’, *Viator* 16 (1985): 243-58; S. Powell, ‘The Transmission and Circulation of the *Lay Folks’ Catechism*’, in A. J. Minnis (ed.), *Late Medieval Religious Texts and Their Transmission: Essays in Honour of A. I. Doyle* (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 67-84; D. A. Lawton, ‘Gaytryge’s Sermon, *Dictamen*, and Middle English Verse’, *Modern Philology* 76 (1979): 329-53. In 1361 Archbishop Islip published a similar text, his *brevis libellus*, for the Province of Canterbury: Pantin, *The English Church*, p. 212.



conscience of the laity might be examined.<sup>80</sup> From extant manuscripts it would appear that the *Catechism* was used both by priests in their pastoral duties and by the laity as a private devotional text.<sup>81</sup> The intention of confessional literature was clearly to focus on the sins in order that as full a confession as possible might be made by the penitent. The structure of the seven deadly sins (along with the commandments) provided a useful prompt for the confessor and penitent to ensure that no penitential stone remained unturned.<sup>82</sup> Moreover, just as these texts were produced to assist the parish priest in his duties, and often subsequently found their way into the possession of the laity, so texts were produced specifically for the laity which provided them with a formula to ensure full confession. An example, which may have been written by Richard Rolle, is to be found in the late fourteenth-century Vernon manuscript. This text begins with a general acknowledgement of guilt and then more-specific guilt is confessed as committed according to the structure of the seven deadly sins. The confession regarding gluttony reads as follows:

Also I crie God Merci þat I haue sunged in Glotonie: Ofte-tyme eten and drunken out of tyme, haue lykyng in dilicious metes and drinkes and eten and drunken more þen I schulde, and also eten and drunken often whon I hedde no wille þerto; and in alle þe spices of Glotonye I knowleche me gulti, and crie god Merci.<sup>83</sup>

---

<sup>80</sup> The text from the Archbishop's Register (BIHR Register 11, fols. 205r-297v) is edited in T. F. Simmons and H. E. Nolloth (eds.), *The Lay Folk's Catechism or the English and Latin Versions of Archbishop Thoresby's Instruction for the People; Together with a Wycliffite Adaptation of the Same, and the Corresponding Canons of the Council of Lambeth*, EETS, OS 118 (1901).

<sup>81</sup> The *Catechism* is extant in full in twelve manuscripts, in altered or adapted form in six manuscripts, and in extract form in six manuscripts: Powell, 'The Transmission and Circulation', pp. 73-74. A range of such texts were written to assist confessors. Another popular example is the thirteenth-century *Manuel des péchés*, which was written in French by William Waddington, a lawyer associated with the household of Walter Gray, Archbishop of York. The *Manuel* was translated into Middle English by Robert Manning as *Handlyng Synne*: Hughes, 'The Administration of Confession', p. 92. It was also translated as *A Boke of Shryft and Penance* by another translator who seems to have been ignorant of Manning's work: A. I. Doyle, 'A Survey of the Origins and Circulation of Theological Writings in the 14<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> and early 16<sup>th</sup> Centuries with Special Consideration of the Part of the Clergy Therein' (Unpublished PhD Diss., Cambridge University, 1953), p. 65. Another such confessor's manual is the *Speculum Christiani*, which is extant in 66 manuscripts (of which only one is entirely in Middle English) and four early printed editions. A study of this text, along with a useful survey of other pastoral manuals, has been made in V. Gillespie, 'The Literary Form of the Middle English Pastoral Manual, with Particular Reference to the *Speculum Christiani* and Some Related Texts' (Unpublished PhD Diss., Oxford University, 1981).

<sup>82</sup> Any Christian who was unsure of the risks of not making a full confession need only to have looked at the woodcuts in Wynkyn de Worde's edition of the *Speculum peccatorum*. The text is preceded by two woodcuts: the first is of Christ surrounded by the instruments of the passion: the second depicts a kneeling man praying whilst being whipped by a demon as Christ speaks to another demon with a whip, no doubt telling him of another sinner in need of torture: J. Griffiths (ed.), *Speculum peccatorum: The Mirror of Sinners Printed in London by Wynkyn de Worde c. 1509-10* (London, 1992).

<sup>83</sup> C. Horstmann (ed.), *Yorkshire Writers: Richard Rolle of Hampole and His Followers* (London, 1896), 2: 341.



There then follows the formula for confessing sins against the ten commandments, of not having fulfilled the seven acts of corporal mercy, and having misused his five senses. A tract follows this confession which explicates the ten commandments, the seven deadly sins, the five senses, the seven corporal acts of mercy, the seven spiritual acts of mercy and the four principal virtues.<sup>84</sup> Such a text was clearly not intended to be regurgitated *verbatim* in the confessional, but rather to act as a prompt to ensure that no sins committed remained unconfessed to endanger the penitent's soul. Similar shorter and simpler tracts also existed to enable the penitent to remember that to which he should be confessing, such as rhyming mnemonic verses recounting the seven deadly sins and their opposing virtues and the ten commandments.<sup>85</sup> Through such texts the episcopal authorities undoubtedly hoped to create within the Christian laity a conscience rooted in orthodoxy.

Preaching also had an important role to play in the instruction of the laity.<sup>86</sup> Indeed, the emphasis on confession found in the Fourth Lateran Council depended on the growth in preaching which occurred from the end of the second decade of the thirteenth century to the end of the Middle Ages.<sup>87</sup> The urban environment was particularly influential as regards preaching, as the growth of the towns provided the ready-made audiences in concentrated populations which produced both the need and the opportunity for preaching.<sup>88</sup> In London, St Paul's Cross was one such locus for

---

<sup>84</sup> For example, the explication of gluttony states: "'Whon sungeþ a mon in Glotonye?" Whon he prow vndescret etynge or drinkynge vndisposeþ him-self to seure his god, for ful wombe makeþ empti soule; ffor wher gloteny & dronkenesse regneþ, may no wisdom beo': Horstmann (ed.) *Yorkshire Writers*, 2: 344.

<sup>85</sup> A selection of these are printed in Russell, 'Vernacular Instruction of the Laity', pp. 111-19.

<sup>86</sup> According to Haines, preaching 'was considered the fundamental didactic tool for reaching a wide audience': R. M. Haines, 'Education in English Ecclesiastical Legislation of the Later Middle Ages', in C. J. Cuming and D. Baker (eds.), *Councils and Assemblies*, Studies in Church History 7 (1971), p. 173. Still essential, though somewhat dated, for the study of medieval preaching are G. R. Owst, *Preaching in Medieval England: A New Introduction to Sermon Manuscripts of the Period c. 1350-1450* (Cambridge, 1926); and G. R. Owst, *Literature and the Pulpit: A Neglected Chapter in the History of English Letters and the English People*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. (Oxford, 1961). More recent works include H. L. Spencer, *English Preaching in the Later Middle Ages* (Oxford, 1993); B. M. Kienzle *et al.* (ed.), *Models of Holiness in Medieval Sermons: Proceedings of the International Symposium (Kalamazoo, 4-7 May 1995)* (Louvain-La-Neuve, 1996); B. M. Kienzle (ed.), *The Sermon*, Typologie des Sources du Moyen Âge Occidental Vols. 81-83 (Turnhout, 2000).

<sup>87</sup> T. J. Heffernan, 'Sermon Literature', in A. S. G. Edwards (ed.), *Middle English Prose: A Critical Guide to Major Authors and Genres* (New Brunswick, N. J., 1984), p. 180. See also D. W. Robertson, Jr., 'Frequency of Preaching in Thirteenth-Century England', *Speculum* 24 (1949): 376-88.

<sup>88</sup> Pantin, *The English Church*, p. 236. See also, P. B. Roberts, 'Preaching in/ and the Medieval City', in Hamesse *et al.* (eds.), *Medieval Sermons and Society*, pp. 151-64. Robert Ball's thesis considers later medieval towns and cities as areas of 'religious sensitivity' in which there were strong networks of exchange in religious texts and ideas. He suggests that London and York had particularly strong devotional climates: R. M. Ball, 'The Education of the English Parish Clergy in the Later Middle Ages with Particular Reference to the Manuals of Instruction' (Unpublished PhD Diss., Cambridge University,



preaching, which also served as a place of public assembly and the place for official proclamations.<sup>89</sup> The hearing of sermons can be seen as a very real part of being an inhabitant of a medieval city. As can be seen from Pecham's constitutions, sermons were expected to be preached to the laity in the vernacular, and there is evidence from after the Norman Conquest to the end of the medieval period that those licensed to preach did so in English.<sup>90</sup> Such sermons often made use of the seven deadly sins as their organisational structure, just as confessional material did. For example, sermons written by John Waldeby, appointed penitentiary for the city of York by Archbishop Thoresby in 1354, on the subject of the *Pater noster* are in fact homilies on the seven deadly sins.<sup>91</sup> Likewise, a book of sermons acquired by John Sheppey, Bishop of Rochester, during his time at Oxford University in the 1330s contains a sermon, '*De agno*', which utilises the seven appeals of the *Pater noster*, the seven deadly sins, the seven gifts of the holy ghost, etc.<sup>92</sup> Similarly, the sermons of *Jacob's Well* deal with a

---

1976), pp. 113-45. The friars played a huge role in preaching in the medieval city. See Dobson, 'Mendicant Ideal and Practice', pp.110-17; Heffernan, 'Sermon Literature', p. 184; J. Röhrkasten, 'London and London Mendicants in the Late Middle Ages', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 47 (1996): 446-77; J. Röhrkasten, 'Mendicants in the Metropolis: The Londoners and the Development of the London Friaries', in M. Prestwich, R. H. Britnell, and R. Frame (eds.), *Thirteenth Century England VI: Proceedings of the Durham Conference 1995* (Woodbridge, 1997), pp. 61-75. Despite the fact that the popularity of the friars undoubtedly declined after the thirteenth century, they still seem to have been a valuable source of preaching. The importance of preaching caused the friars to adopt a style of church-plan in which the nave was a very spacious; this was subsequently adopted by the parish churches: Pantin, *The English Church*, p. 236.

<sup>89</sup> Sermons were also preached there on important civic and religious occasions, which were attended by various dignitaries, the mayor and aldermen, as well as royal and ecclesiastical officials: P. J. Horner, 'Preachers at Paul's Cross: Religion Society and Politics in Late Medieval England, in Hamesse *et al.*(eds.), *Medieval Sermons and Society*, p. 264. Bishop Brunton declared that bishops should preach in London because 'in that place there is a greater devotion and a more intelligent people ... Moreover, because each bishop of England has subjects or parishioners in London ... when he gives his instructions there it is as though he was preaching to his own people and to the other churches in England'. Cited in Owst, *Preaching in Medieval England*, p. 208.

<sup>90</sup> J. Coleman, *English Literature in History 1350-1400: Readers and Writers* (London, 1981), p. 172-73. It is difficult to know the intended audience for sermons as a result of the practice of transcribing vernacular sermons into Latin: *ibid.*, p. 173.

<sup>91</sup> A. Gwynn, *The English Austin Friars in the Time of Wyclif* (London, 1940), pp. 117-118. These sermons seem to have been composed for the benefit of other preachers and represent careful revisions of the popular sermons which he had preached in York on the subject of the Creed and the seven deadly sins: *ibid.*, pp. 117-20.

<sup>92</sup> It is written primarily in English with short Latin quotations: M. Laing, 'A Fourteenth-Century Sermon on the Number Seven in Merton College, Oxford, Ms 248', *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen* 98 (1997): 113-17. A variety of medieval sermons are available in print, from which can be gathered the importance of the seven deadly sins to sermon literature. See, for example, W. O. Ross (ed.), *Middle English Sermons Edited from British Museum MS. Royal 18 B. xxiii*, EETS, OS 209 (1960); S. Powell (ed.), *The Advent and Nativity Sermons from a Fifteenth-Century Revision of John Mirk's Festial: Ed. from B. L. MSS Harley 2247, Royal 18 B. XXV and Gloucester Library 22* (Heidelberg, 1981). A selection of sermon summaries can be found in Spencer, *English Preaching*, pp. 335-58. Gluttony does not seem to have been a favourite subject of attack by the Lollards, as it features rarely in their extant sermons: A. Hudson (ed.), *English Wycliffite Sermons* (Oxford, 1983-1996), 5 vols. In fact, the Lollards rejected the fasts ordained by the Church. See, for example, the case of Margery Baxter: Goldberg (ed.), *Women in England*, p. 293.



theological themes amongst which the seven deadly sins play a large part.<sup>93</sup>

Likewise, the seven deadly sins played a central part in handbooks produced to assist in the writing of sermons. From the opening decades of the thirteenth century numerous handbooks were produced which the preacher could use quickly to locate quotations pertaining to virtually any moral or doctrinal topic of interest to him.<sup>94</sup> Many were organised alphabetically, so that the preacher could look up topics such as gluttony, fasting, temperance, etc. for use in the exposition of his sermon theme, whereas others, such as the *Fasciculus morum*, use the seven deadly sins as their organisational device.<sup>95</sup> After a general discussion of vice and sin, the *Fasciculus morum* discusses each of the seven deadly sins in turn, a chapter being devoted to each sin. Each sin is treated by means of repeated topics, such as the definition of each sin, reasons for detesting it, its species, and its evil effects; there then follows a description of its opponent virtue. The entire rhetoric follows the model of Peraldus' thirteenth-century *Summa de vitiis et virtutibus*.<sup>96</sup>

In fact, one could go on almost indefinitely recounting the texts on the seven deadly sins which were available in the Middle Ages.<sup>97</sup> As one contemporary remarked,

<sup>93</sup> Brandeis (ed.), *Jacob's Well*, *passim*.

<sup>94</sup> R. H. Rouse and M. A. Rouse, *Preachers, Florilegia and Sermons: Studies in the Manipulus florum of Thomas of Ireland* (Toronto, 1979), p. 3

<sup>95</sup> An example of an alphabetical handbook is C. V. Nolcken (ed.), *The Middle English Translation of the Rosarium theologie: A Selection from Cbr., Gonville and Caius Coll. MS 354/ 581* (Heidelberg, 1979). See also, P. Binkley, 'Preachers' Responses to Thirteenth-Century Encyclopaedism', in P. Binkley (ed.), *Pre-Modern Encyclopaedic Texts: Proceedings of the Second COMERS Conference, Groningen, 1-4 July, 1996* (Leiden, 1997), pp. 75-88. On the use of alphabetical handbooks see C. V. Nolcken, 'Some Alphabetical Compendia and How Preachers Used Them in Fourteenth Century England', *Viator* 12 (1981): 271-88. Another handbook which uses the seven deadly sins as its organisational device is the *Etymachia*. Although extant in a large number of manuscripts, it does not appear to have made its way into England: J. S. Norman, 'The Illustrated *Etymachia*: A New Resource for the Hard-Pressed Medieval Preacher', *Medieval Sermon Studies* 38 (1996): 46-55.

<sup>96</sup> S. Wenzel, *Verses in Sermons: Fasciculus morum and its Middle English Poems* (Cambridge, Mass., 1978), p. 10. It is extant in 28 manuscripts, and an additional 20 references to copies have been found by Siegfried Wenzel in booklists, wills, and inventories of the fifteenth century. The social distribution of these texts agrees with its purpose as a clergyman's book, although a copy was left by Thomas Dorchestre, a London ironmonger, to the executor of his will: *ibid.*, pp. 22-24. That such handbooks were of interest outside clerical circles is evidenced by the fact that Chaucer chooses to conclude his *Canterbury Tales* with 'The Parson's Tale', which is in part structured as a preacher's manual. A summary of the sources suggested for 'The Parson's Tale' can be found in S. Wenzel, 'The Source for the *Remedia* in the Parson's Tale', *Traditio* 27 (1971): 433-53. See also S. Wenzel, 'The Source of Chaucer's Seven Deadly Sins', *Traditio* 30 (1974): 351-78.

<sup>97</sup> There was a great deal of repetition as to the contents of these texts as they tended to be based on Raymond Peñaforte's *Summa de casibus conscientiae* (1220-45), Peraldus' *Summa de vitiis et virtutibus*, or Loren's *Somme le roi*. Loren's work itself is not thought to be original, rather an adaptation of the works of Peraldus, Peñaforte, and a host of other better and lesser-known theologians: Bloomfield, *The Seven Deadly Sins*, p. 125. For an examination of the ways in which Peraldus' work was adapted during the Middle Ages see S. Wenzel, 'The Continuing Life of William Peraldus's *Summa vitiorum*', in M. D.



in obvious frustration, ‘Per beþ so manye bokes & tretees of vyces & vertues & of dyuerse doctrynes, þat þis schort lyfe schalle rapere haue anende of anye manne. þanne he maye owþere studye hem or rede hem’.<sup>98</sup> Morton Bloomfield even goes so far as to suggest that the seven deadly sins were so popularised by medieval preachers and confessors that they came to occupy a much more important place in the lay concept of religion than their position in theology warranted.<sup>99</sup> Gluttony was clearly an important part of both scholastic and popular theology. To what extent, however, can teaching on gluttony be seen as playing an influential role in the everyday lives of those living in the medieval city? After all, in the civic authorities’ construction of the city as the place of plenty there seems to be no room for the admonitory role of gluttony. It seems unlikely that this vice, which took its shape in the deserts at the hands of ascetics who practised and aspired to the harshest of privations, had any real place in the medieval city. The Church could have allied itself in its injunctions on gluttony with the rhetoric of moderation espoused by the physicians, and thus have given gluttony additional relevance. In fact, however, they sought to alienate themselves from restraint in eating practices for the sake of good health, claiming that temperance possessed virtue only when it was carried out for the love of God and not for the sake of health.<sup>100</sup> In many ways, therefore, it is difficult to see how this particular vice might have had practical meanings for the urban laity.

### **The Function of Gluttony**

On one level, teaching on gluttony can be seen as having a practical place in civic life as a result of the fact that not only did gluttony affect the state of the individual’s soul, it also had a more social aspect. For us, gluttony is very much the sin of the individual. The consequences of gluttony are seen primarily to be obesity and ill health, and, while these may place some extra burden on an already over-strained National Health Service, they do not really affect society at large. In the Middle Ages, however, gluttony was seen to have much wider social ramifications. As was mentioned in the previous chapter, the opening of *Piers Plowman* depicts the ‘fair feeld ful of folk’

---

Jordan and K. Emery, Jr. (eds.), *Ad litteram: Authoritative Texts and their Medieval Readers* (London, 1992), pp. 135-63.

<sup>98</sup> K. Horstmann (ed.), ‘*Orologium sapientiae* or the Seven Poyntes of Trewe Wisdom’, aus MS. Douce 114’, *Anglia* 10 (1888): 328.

<sup>99</sup> Bloomfield, *The Seven Deadly Sins*, p. 93.

<sup>100</sup> As the Parson says: ‘Agayns Glotonye is the remedie abstinence, as seith Galien; but that holde I nat meritorie, if he do it oonly for the heele of his body. Seint Augustyn wole that abstinence be doon for vertu and with pacience’: Chaucer, *Riverside Chaucer*, p. 317, l. 831.



all ‘Werchyng and wandryng as the world asketh’, where the production of the necessities of life can easily be disrupted by ‘wastours’ who ‘with *glotonye* destruyeth’ the winnings of hard toil.<sup>101</sup> Similarly, *Jacob’s Well* uses the example of the bear stealing honey to describe the glutton who so ‘delyteth in delycaces, þat he is noȝt aschamed to devowre & waste þat manye oþere haue sore trauayled fore’.<sup>102</sup> Thus, gluttons could be perceived as those who took from society more than they contributed, a pernicious influence who could easily upset the delicate balance of production and consumption which kept the community alive. Moreover, on a much more basic level, gluttony affected others due to the nature of the medieval system of charitable provisioning. As children we may be told by our mothers to eat up the food on our plate for the sake of the starving in Africa or India, but at an early age we realise that our left-over vegetables have no direct consequences for those suffering from malnutrition elsewhere in the world.<sup>103</sup> The state of affairs in the Middle Ages was somewhat different, however, as the poor might be fed quite literally from the leftovers from the household table.<sup>104</sup> As Waster points out in the face of Winner’s criticism, ‘With oure festes and oure fare we feden the pore’.<sup>105</sup>

The archetypal story used to describe this kind of behaviour is the tale of Dives and Lazarus, in which the rich Dives refuses to give even a crumb from his table to the beggar Lazarus, and as a consequence is punished in Hell in his tongue by raging thirst which no one will help to quench with even a drop of water.<sup>106</sup> Through the figure of the starving Lazarus the complex and enormous medieval social problem of poverty is rendered comprehensible. Dives represents <sup>the</sup> role of the more affluent populace who have a responsibility for the well-being of the poor.<sup>107</sup> Although the urban householder might not literally feed the poor man at his door with scraps from his table, the example of

<sup>101</sup> William Langland, *The Vision of Piers Plowman*, ed. A. V. C. Schmidt, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (London, 1995), p. 2, ll. 17, 19, 22. My italics.

<sup>102</sup> Brandeis (ed.), *Jacob’s Well*, p. 142.

<sup>103</sup> In fact the instruction to “eat up” encourages over-eating. The concern here is with personal wastage in the home rather than a concern regarding the nutrition of wider society.

<sup>104</sup> Even virtuous fasting had its social aspect as that which one had abstained from eating should be given to the poor: Gower, *The Complete Works ... Vol. 1: The French Works*, p. 190; Gower, *Mirour de l’omme*, p. 224. The penance assigned to gluttons was not only fasting but also alms-giving: ‘Fede þe pore of þat þou sparest,/ And lete hem fele how þow farest’: Peacock (ed.), *Instructions for Parish Priest*, p. 52, ll. 1709-10.

<sup>105</sup> Trigg (ed.), *Wynmere and Wastoure*, p. 10, l. 295

<sup>106</sup> For example, Gower, *The Complete Works ... Vol. 3: The English Works: Confessio Amantis Lib. V. 19-1-Lib VIII*, pp. 193-98.

<sup>107</sup> The gluttonous consumption of food in the face of the starving poor was perceived to be a form of avarice. Thus, the tale of Dives and Lazarus often appeared in sermon handbooks under avarice rather than gluttony.



Dives and Lazarus reveals the expected and necessary relationship between the citizen and the urban poor. As such, therefore, gluttony can be seen as a particularly socially destructive form of selfishness. The *Book for a Simple and Devout Woman*, which complains that the glutton does ‘no good’ for the poor widow, describes the food consumed by such gluttons who deprive the hard-working poor as all ‘blodi’ and their drink as all ‘maliciouse’.<sup>108</sup> Gluttony is represented as a grotesque form of cannibalism in which the glutton consumes the flesh and blood of the needy poor: ‘hit is þe flesh of þe poure man alle þat þei ete and hure blode þei drynken when þei wiþ hur gloteny wastep þat þei scholde bi leue’.<sup>109</sup> As was noted in the previous chapter, in many ways the urban poor were neglected in civic legislation. Perhaps the religious concept of gluttony may have been used to fill this gap and been mobilised in an attempt to deal with the problem of urban poverty.

In general gluttony was seen as a vice which caused social disintegration. In *Wynnere and Wastoure* a form of gluttony is described that would fall under the category of ‘delicacy’, which means to say the consumption of expensive, rare, and dainty dishes. Remarkably, this ‘delicacy’ is defended by Waster, who maintains that it is his consumption of the more expensive foodstuffs that maintains the fragile social order. He suggests that if all were allowed indiscriminately to eat as lords then there ‘Schold not a ladde be in londe a lorde for to serve’.<sup>110</sup> In texts dealing specifically with the sins, however, both gluttony and its offspring delicacy are accused of causing social disruptions rather than social stability, as a result of the fact that the glutton is often reduced to selling that which he owns in order to feed his appetite. For example, the *Fasciculus morum* says of the glutton that, just as Satan tempted Christ to turn stones into bread, so gluttons obey the devil when they change the stones of their properties into bread and wine, which they then greedily consume.<sup>111</sup> The *Book for a Simple and*

---

<sup>108</sup> Diekstra (ed.), *Book for a Simple and Devout Woman*, pp. 250-52. This is read both literally and allegorically; the widow stands for the soul.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 250.

<sup>110</sup> Trigg (ed.), *Wynnere and Wastoure*, p. 13, l. 388. *Wynnere and Wastoure* is more closely allied to sumptuary legislation such as was issued in 1363, which attempted to keep everyone in their proper place in society by restricting the consumption and use of luxury goods, than to gluttony texts. See, C. Dyer, *Standards of Living in the Later Middle Ages: Social Change in England c. 1200-1520* (Cambridge, 1998), pp. 88-89. It is thought that sumptuary legislation in reality had very limited effects because of the impossibility of enforcement; indeed, the 1363 statute was withdrawn after a year: C. Dyer, ‘Work Ethics in the Fourteenth Century’, in J. Bothwell, P. J. P. Goldberg, and W. M. Ormrod (eds.), *The Problem of Labour in Fourteenth-Century England* (Woodbridge, 2000), p. 27. One wonders if the injunctions of the Church on the issue of gluttony fell on equally deaf ears.

<sup>111</sup> Wenzel (ed.), *Fasciculus morum*, p. 633.



*Devout Woman* claims that gluttony can completely invert the normal social order:

‘Gluteny makeþ hem poure þat somtyme were riche, and casteþ hem vnder fote þat somtyme weren hyȝe. Hit makeþ man to selle his londes and his fee; syþþ hit makeþ hym from dore to dore his brede to begge’.<sup>112</sup> In the *Mirour de l’omme*, Gower also sees the end result of gluttony as poverty, but his critique is in many ways more interesting because he focuses on gluttony as a kind of perversion. In the household of a delicate man, eating rules the household; all actions are directed towards putting delicious and curious foods upon the table. The cook becomes a kind of high priest officiating over the rituals in the kitchen.<sup>113</sup> Gower notes that when God created the world he ordained that the birds, beasts, and fish were there as food for mankind. He also notes that he did not ordain the use of cookery.<sup>114</sup> The cook is described as someone who turns upside down God’s creation in order to make it fitting for the delicate man’s appetite, and cooking is an unnatural act, an artifice, created to serve the unnatural appetite. Similarly, I think the description of the actions of cooks by Chaucer’s Pardoner, as well as alluding to the topical debate on transubstantiation, is likewise designed to instil a sense of the unnaturalness of the cook’s art:

Thise cookes, how they stampe, and streyne, and grynde,  
And turnen substaunce into accident  
To fulfille alle thy likerous talent!  
Out of the harde bones knocke they  
The mary, for they caste noght away  
That may go thurgh the golet softe and swoote.<sup>115</sup>

The language used to describe the cook’s craft is filled with a violence and destruction seemingly more fitted to the art of the torturer rather than that of the creative cook. No doubt Chaucer intended this description to contain resonances of the tortures of Hell to remind the glutton of the place to which he was heading. Gower again uses unpleasant, destructive imagery in a later description of Gluttony in the *Mirour de l’omme* where the

<sup>112</sup> Diekstra (ed.), *Book for a Simple and Devout Woman*, p. 251.

<sup>113</sup> See also, Wenzel (ed.), *Fasciculus morum*, p. 631.

<sup>114</sup> ‘*Au primer establissement/ Dieus les viandes de la gent/ Du beste, oisel, piscon du mier./ Fist ordiner tout proprement/ Sanz les curies autrement/ Des grantz delices adjouster:/ Mais ore il falt braier, streigner,/ Et tout de sus en jus tourner,/ Que dieus ot fait si plainement;/ Dont m’est avis q’en son manger/ Ly delicatz voldra changer/ Et dieu et son ordeignement*’: Gower, *The Complete Works ... Vol. 1: The French Works*, p. 92, ll. 7945-56; ‘When God first established things, He ordained the food of people, beast, bird, and fish of sea, to each his own without addition of the great delights of cookery. But now it is necessary to grind, strain, turn upside down everything which God made in such plenitude; so it seems to me that a delicate person in his eating wants to change both God and His ordinance’: Gower, *Mirour de l’omme*, pp. 108-10.

<sup>115</sup> Chaucer, *Riverside Chaucer*, p. 197, ll. 538-43. On eucharistic allusions in ‘The Pardoner’s Tale’ see R. E. Nichols, Jr., ‘The Pardoner’s Ale and Cake’, *P.M.L.A.* 82 (1967): 498-504.



cuisine of the glutton is compared to a skin disease which uses up medicines but cannot be cured. Just like the skin disease, the glutton consumes all in his path: he wastes and destroys wild and domesticated creatures; he despoils woods, meadows, fields, and vineyards.<sup>116</sup> Thus, again there is the image of the natural fruitfulness of the earth provided by God for man's use, twisted unnaturally to feed the consuming desires of the glutton.

By far the most popularly castigated branch of gluttony in the Middle ages was, however, drunkenness. Chaucer devotes entire sections of both 'The Pardoner's Tale' and 'The Parson's Tale' to exposing the dangers of drunkenness, but this vice also raises its head briefly in many other tales. To give but a few examples, the corrupt apprentice of 'The Cook's Tale' is described as loving better 'the tavern than the shoppe'; it is the drunken sleep of the messenger in 'The Man of Law's Tale' which allows the substitution of the letter by Donegild; and one of the signs of the virtuous nature of Virginius' daughter in 'The Physician's Tale' is that Bacchus 'hadde of hir mouth right no maistrie' due to his connection with lechery.<sup>117</sup> Although medieval thinking on the dangers of drunkenness cannot be seen to be in any way as well-formulated as that of the Victorian temperance movement, drunkenness was, nevertheless, seen as both a moral and a social problem.<sup>118</sup> As was seen above in terms of gluttony in general, drunkenness, whilst endangering an individual's soul, could also be seen as having the potential to upset the smooth-running of society at large.<sup>119</sup>

---

<sup>116</sup> 'Phisque conte d'un grief mal/ Qu'est appelé le loup roial;/ Cil guaste toute medicine/ Et si n'en guarist au final./ Ensi ly glous superflual/ Devore et gaste en sa cuisine/ Le domest et le salvagine,/ Ne laist terrestre ne marine,/ Oisel, piscoun ne bestial,/ Ne bois ne pré ne champ ne vine,/ Pepin ne fruit, flour ne racine,/ Ainz tout deguaste en general': Gower, *The Complete Works ... Vol. 1: The French Works*, p. 99, ll. 8521-32; 'Medical science tells of a grievous ill called loup royal. It uses up medicines and in the end it cannot be cured. In the same way the surfeiting glutton devours and wastes in his cuisine both domesticated and wild creatures. He leaves neither terrestrial nor marine creature, bird, fish nor beast. Nor does he leave wood, meadow, field, vineyard, seed or fruit, flower or root. He despoils everything in general': Gower, *Mirour de l'omme.*, p. 118.

<sup>117</sup> Chaucer, *Riverside Chaucer*, p. 85, l. 4376; p. 98, ll. 742-45; p. 190, ll. 58-59.

<sup>118</sup> A discussion of the connections between religious and social considerations concerning drink in the Victorian period can be found in B. Harrison, *Drink and the Victorians: The Temperance Question in England 1815-1872* (London, 1971), pp. 179-95.

<sup>119</sup> Richard Britnell has written on the interconnected nature of morality and the law regarding the sale of ale, but this is done from the aspect of corruption within the brewing trade itself rather than amongst its consumers: R. H. Britnell, 'Morals, Laws and Ale in Medieval England', in D. Buschinger (ed.), *Le droit et sa perception dans la littérature et les mentalités médiévales: Actes du colloque du centre d'études médiévales d'université de Picardie, Amiens, 17-19 mars. 1989* (Göppingen, 1993), pp. 21-29. On a very practical level, some of the consequences of drinking can be seen in the fatal accidents which occurred to those who were drunk. For example, William Bonefont fell to his death while urinating in a drunken state from the top of the steps of his rent: R. R. Sharpe (ed.), *Calendar of Coroners Rolls of the City of London AD 1300-1378* (London, 1913), pp. 194-95. Likewise, John de Markenby accidentally



As in the case of gluttony, drunkenness was thought to be dangerous because it led to other sins. The *Fasciculus morum* contains the story of a man who prays to the devil for success in some enterprise. The devil agrees to help in on condition that he performs one of the following tasks: he be hanged, he kill his father, he sleep with his mother, or he gets drunk just once. The man, of course, chooses drunkenness as he sees it as being '*peccatum levius*'. However, in his drunken state he goes on to rape his mother and then kills his father when he chastises him. As a result he is hanged as a murderer. Thus the *exemplum* concludes, '*Ecce quot peccata ex ebrietate oriuntur*'.<sup>120</sup> That drunkenness was the source of other vices was sometimes attributed to the fact that it was seen as a kind of insanity. Chaucer's Pardoner cites Seneca as his authority when he suggests that no difference can be found

Bitwix a man that is out of his mynde  
And a man which that is dronkelewe,  
But that woodnesse, yfallen in a shrewe,  
Persevereth lenger than doth dronkenesse.<sup>121</sup>

Likewise, Gower in his tale of the drunken and lecherous Galba and Vitellius in the *Confessio Amantis* declares there is no difference between 'the dronken and the wode' because both have lost their wisdom and thus are incapable of fearing vice.<sup>122</sup>

Unsurprisingly, the locus for many manifestations of the vices arising from drunkenness was drinking houses.<sup>123</sup> In the Middle Ages there were three main types of drinking house, the inn, the tavern, and the alehouse. Inns were the most high status of these establishments, providing accommodation, food, and drink primarily for

---

fatally stabbed himself whilst drunkenly leaping around: *ibid.*, pp. 231-32. For further examples see *ibid.*, pp. 177-78, 233-34, 244, 245, and Riley (ed.), *Memorials*, pp. 8, 9.

<sup>120</sup> Wenzel (ed.), *Fasciculus morum*, p. 632.

<sup>121</sup> Chaucer, *Riverside Chaucer*, p. 196, ll. 494-97. An anachronistic and unconvincing argument for the Pardoner as an alcoholic can be found in J. M. Bowers, "'Dronkenesse is ful of stryvyng": Alcoholism and Ritual Violence in Chaucer's *Pardoner's Tale*', *English Literary History (ELH)* 57 (1990): 757-84.

<sup>122</sup> Gower, *The Complete Works ... Vol. 3: The English Works: Confessio Amantis, Lib. V. 1971-Lib. VIII*, p. 182, l. 553. Drunkenness was also associated with lechery. The biblical source for this connection is the story of Lot who lay with his daughters because he was drunk. See, for example, Chaucer, *Riverside Chaucer*, p. 196, ll. 485-87; Langland, *Piers Plowman*, p. 15, ll. 27-33. No doubt it is this association which means that in the play *Mary Magdalen* it is in the tavern that Mary is seduced by the gallant, Curiosity: Baker *et al.* (eds.), *Late Medieval Religious Plays*, pp. 39-42. The tavern in this play has been seen as the site of the perversion of the appropriate uses of food and the place where food incites lust: S. Milner, 'Flesh and Food: The Function of Female Asceticism in the Digby *Mary Magdalene*', *Philological Quarterly* 73 (1994): 392. The *Fasciculus morum* notes that when gluttons are drunk they visit brothels and bring forth cursed offspring of quarrelling, theft, lies, manslaughter, contempt of God, and self-neglect: Wenzel (ed.), *Fasciculus morum*, p. 631.

<sup>123</sup> Drinking houses were a largely urban phenomenon.: P. Clark, *The English Alehouse: A Social History 1200-1830* (London, 1983), pp. 6, 29.



travellers.<sup>124</sup> Taverns were the next rung down in terms of size and status and sold primarily wine. Alehouses were the smallest and the lowest status drinking houses.<sup>125</sup> Were they, however, the dens of vice that moral literature would have us believe? Certainly there is evidence of corruption, as was seen in the previous chapter, perpetrated by those selling wine and ales. Such corruption was castigated both in civic legislation and moralising texts.<sup>126</sup> For example, the *Mirour de l'homme* condemns both vintners and brewers for precisely the malpractices legislated against in civic legislation.<sup>127</sup> Indeed the concept of the fraudulent brewer had sufficient currency in the popular imagination for a sermon *exemplum* to tell the tale of the house of a brewster being miraculously saved from fire because she used true measures.<sup>128</sup> Moreover, inns, taverns, and alehouses were also the sites of criminal behaviour amongst their customers.<sup>129</sup> Their warm and cosy interiors were environments conducive to the carrying out of business transactions, both legal and illegal.<sup>130</sup> As was seen in the

---

<sup>124</sup> J. Schofield and A. Vince, *Medieval Towns* (London, 1994), p. 75. An architectural study has been made of medieval inns in W. A. Pantin, 'Medieval Inns', in E. M. Jope (ed.), *Studies in Building History: Essays in Recognition of the Work of B. H. St. J. O'Neil* (London, 1961), pp. 166-91. An in-depth study of one particular urban inn has been made in J. Munby *et al.*, 'Zacharia's: A Fourteenth-Century Oxford New Inn and the Origins of the Medieval Urban Inn', *Oxoniensia* 57 (1992): 245-309. It is to such an establishment that Chaucer's pilgrims retire before commencing their pilgrimage: Chaucer, *Riverside Chaucer*, p. 35, ll. 718-19. In the pseudo-Chaucerian continuation of the *Canterbury Tales* the pilgrims stay at another inn, the 'Cheker-of-the-Hope', at Canterbury at the end of their pilgrimage: F. J. Furnivall and W. G. Stone (eds.), *The Tale of Beryn with a Prologue of the Merry Adventure of the Pardoner with a Tapster at Canterbury. Re-edited from the Duke of Northumberland's unique Manuscript*, EETS, ES 105 (1909; repr. 1975), p. 1, l. 14. I shall discuss inns further in the next chapter.

<sup>125</sup> Riley (ed.), *Memorials*, pp. 386-87. Although drinking houses were numerous in London, they also thrived in Southwark where the proprietors were able to avoid London's stringent legislation: M. Carlin, *Medieval Southwark* (London, 1996), p. 194.

<sup>126</sup> Moral and civic legal concerns regarding brewing practices can be seen to merge in the *Harrowing of Hell* play put on by the cooks, tapsters, and innkeepers of Chester. In this play a woman is depicted on her way to hell as a consequence of fraudulent brewing practices: 'Taveners, tapsters of this citty/ Shalbe promoted here [i.e. to Hell] with mee/ for breaking statutes of this contrye,/ hurtinge the commonweale': R. M. Lumiansky and D. Mills (eds.), *The Chester Mystery Cycle*, EETS, SS 3 (1974), p. 338. Cited in Britnell, 'Morals, Laws and Ale', p. 26. Implicitly here civic officials in legislating against fraud in the brewing trade are fulfilling the will of God.

<sup>127</sup> Gower accuses vintners of mixing good wine with bad; mixing red and white wine together to restore the colour; mixing wine with water; selling on kind of wine as another. He accuses the brewers of making bad and over-priced ale, and selling from false measures: Gower, *The Complete Works ... Vol. 1: The French Works*, pp. 288-89; Gower, *Mirour de l'homme*, pp. 341-43.

<sup>128</sup> Banks (ed.), *An Alphabet of Tales*, p. 330. In *Piers Plowman* Coveitise's wife is Rose the Regrator, who sells corrupt and over-priced ale from deficient measures: Langland, *Piers Plowman*, pp. 72-73, ll. 215-223.

<sup>129</sup> Drinking houses were certainly the sites of quarrels (often over gambling games played there) which had fatal consequences See, for example, Sharpe (ed.), *Calendar of Coroners' Rolls*, pp. 17-18, 38-39, 49-50, 84-85, 203-4, 232-33.

<sup>130</sup> Clark, *The English Alehouse*, p. 8. In 1423 a man was found guilty of forging a deed, with the aim of fraudulently gaining property, in the privacy of two London taverns: *CLBK*, p. 20. Jeremy Goldberg suggests that urban taverns were associated with prostitution and petty crime: Goldberg, 'Women in Fifteenth-Century Town Life', p. 118. On the social functions of alehouses in the early modern period see P. Clark, 'The Alehouse and Alternative Society', in D. Pennington and K. Thomas (eds.), *Puritans and*



previous chapter, inns provided spaces for the sale of goods which competed with the civic government's idea of free trade. Thus they were firmly legislated against.<sup>131</sup> It is not unreasonable to assume, therefore, that the popularity of tracts against drunkenness and drinking houses might result from their fitting in with civic legislative agendas. In part the problem with inns came about because the innkeeper was viewed to be legally responsible for the behaviour of his guests in much the same way as a householder was held to be responsible for the actions of his *familia*.<sup>132</sup> Clearly, however, the innkeeper's *familia* was of a much more transient nature and inns were inevitably sites which might rapidly become beyond control.

Drinking houses might also be the subject of castigation because of the link between gluttony and blasphemy, which might easily be translated into general fears of unregulated speech. In apprenticeship indentures of the Middle Ages it was usual for the apprentice to promise, amongst other things, to keep his master's secrets and counsel and not to frequent taverns.<sup>133</sup> Although these two promises might be entirely unconnected, I would suggest that in fact apprentices were instructed to keep free from taverns precisely because of fears surrounding the loosening effect of drink on the tongue and the worry that the apprentice might betray his master's secrets whilst in the tavern. At convivial gatherings in guild halls craftsmen and their apprentices had an enclosed space in which business matters could be resolved and where food and drink could be shared with no fear loosened tongues betraying secrets to outsiders.<sup>134</sup> Drinking houses were undoubtedly attractive locations in which the youth of the city could spend their leisure time and, I would suggest, were regarded by masters with suspicion as they set up alternative social gathering places to the guild hall, gathering places in which

---

*Revolutionaries: Essays in Seventeenth-Century History Presented to Christopher Hill* (Oxford, 1973), pp. 47-72; B. A. Tlusty, 'The Devil's Altar: Society and Drinking in Early Modern Augsburg' (Unpublished PhD Diss., Maryland University, 1994).

<sup>131</sup> On civic restrictions surrounding drinking houses see *CLBH*, p. 27; *CLBK*, pp. 316-17; H. A. Monckton, *A History of the English Public House* (London, 1969), pp. 23, 28; C. Dyer, 'The Consumer and the Market in the Later Middle Ages', in *Everyday Life in Medieval England* (London, 1994), p. 278.

<sup>132</sup> I discuss this in greater length in Chapter 4.

<sup>133</sup> See, for example, the indentures of Nicholas Kyghlay (1371), Robert de Hotoft (1372), and Robert White (1510): Joyce W. Percy (ed.), *York Memorandum Book*, Surtees Society 186 (1973), pp. 4-5, 247. See also E. Lipson, *An Introduction to the Economic History of England. Volume I: The Middle Ages* (London, 1915), p. 281; G. Clune, *The Medieval Guild System* (Dublin, 1943), p. 92. The relationship between masters and apprentices is discussed in P. J. P. Goldberg, 'Masters and Men in Later Medieval England', in D. M. Hadley (ed.), *Masculinity in Medieval Europe* (London, 1999), pp. 56-70.

<sup>134</sup> Guild ordinances frequently state that all disputes should be settled within the guild itself and should not be taken to outsiders until all attempts at internal arbitration have failed: T. Smith (ed.), *English Gilds: The Original Ordinances of More Than One Hundred Early English Gilds*, EETS. OS 40 (1870), *passim*. I discuss the role of guild feasting in the cementing of craft solidarities in Chapter 4.



craft secrets could be betrayed to outsiders.<sup>135</sup> Hence, in Chaucer's 'Cook's Tale' we see the apprentice, Perkyn Revelour, described as setting up 'a meynee of his sort' which had, no doubt, its roots in the 'taverne' where Perkyn spent more time than his master's 'shoppe'.<sup>136</sup> Perkyn's riotous living is described as being 'convertible' [interchangeable] with 'theft', as his master finds out to the cost of his 'chaffare' [business], which perhaps indicates not only ~~of~~ direct stealing by Perkyn to finance his gambling habits and reckless spending, but also ~~of~~ losses which may have resulted from Perkyn's betrayal of his master's secrets.<sup>137</sup> Thus, 'The Cook's Tale' functions as a warning to masters to control the behaviour of their apprentices, especially to keep them from the tavern, and ~~as~~ <sup>as</sup> caution to apprentices as to where such riotous behaviour will eventually lead.<sup>138</sup> I would suggest that the popularity of anti-drunkenness theological instruction could in part be connected with widespread fears over the behaviour of apprentices.

Certainly the tavern as a den of vice, which would result in the ruin of the young man who frequented it, caught the imagination of the medieval moralists, who portrayed it as the Devil's church and schoolroom. The tavern is contrasted with God's church in which miracles are performed: the blind are made to see, the lame are made to walk, speech is given to the dumb, and hearing to the deaf. Thus, although when the glutton enters the Devil's church 'euene he goþ and riȝt as a sobre man doþ', by the time he leaves 'he haþ no fote þat may him vp bere'.<sup>139</sup> The returning glutton is impeded by the miracles performed by the Devil: 'þe wele seyng he makeþ blynd, þe wele goyng he makeþ lame, þe wel spekyng he makeþ doumbe, þe wel hiryng he makeþ deef. and þe right witted he makeþ mad'.<sup>140</sup> Similarly, the tavern is the Devil's school in which he teaches his disciples 'to do glotonye, vilanye and leccherie, swere & for swere. lye,

<sup>135</sup> 'How the Wise Man Tauȝt His Sonne' warns the young man to 'Be waar of vsinge of þe tauerne': F. J. Furnivall (ed.), *The Babees Book*, EETS, OS 32 (1868; repr. 1969), p. 50, l. 59. The lure of the tavern on medieval urban youth is discussed in B. A. Hanawalt, "'The Childe of Bristowe" and the Making of Middle-Class Adolescence', in B. A. Hanawalt and D. Wallace (eds.), *Bodies and Disciplines: Intersections of Literature and History in Fifteenth-Century England* (London, 1996), pp. 155-78. In the monastic context, eating in private places other than the designated communal refectory was connected to the breakdown of discipline and common values. See, for example, the 1439 visitation to Ramsey Abbey: A. Hamilton Thompson (ed.), *Visitations of Religious Houses in the Diocese of Lincoln*, vol. 3, Lincoln Record Society 21 (1929), p. 311.

<sup>136</sup> Chaucer, *Riverside Chaucer*, p. 85, ll. 4381, 4376.

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 85, ll. 4395, 4389.

<sup>138</sup> Paul Strohm discusses the relationship between 'The Cook's Tale' and ideas of revelry, particularly in relationship to the 1381 Rising in P. Strohm, *Theory and the Premodern Text* (London, 2000), pp. 51-64.

<sup>139</sup> Diekstra (ed.), *Book for a Simple and Devout Woman*, pp. 261-62.

<sup>140</sup> Nelson (ed.), *A Myrour to Lewde Men and Wymmen*, pp. 210-11.



sclaunder, bakbite, mysseie, scorne, chide, despise, to be false, wrongful, manace, make barette, mayntene wrong, lette right, contreue gile and treccherie, reneye God, robbe'.<sup>141</sup> The reward for the successful scholars in the Devil's school is 'atte þe laste', as with Perkyn Revelour, is punishment at the hands of the law: to 'be anhonged for her trauaile'.<sup>142</sup>

These ideas are brought vividly to life in the works of more popular writers. The 'develes temple' of 'The Pardoner's Tale' is the place where the 'yonge folk' with 'harpes, lutes, and gyterenes,/ They daunce and pleyen at dees both day and nyght,/ And eten also and drynken over hir myght'.<sup>143</sup> In the packed descriptions of 'tombesteres [dancing girls]/ Fetys [elegant] and smale, and yonge frutesteres,/ Syngeres with harpes, baudes, waferes', it is possible to get some idea of the sounds, smells, and bright colours of the medieval tavern.<sup>144</sup> Although the Pardoner may refer to these characters as 'the verray develes officeres', their attraction (and temptation to sin) for the youth in the tavern is clear. They are a world apart from the cardboard cut-out figures of sermon literature.<sup>145</sup> Likewise the character of Glutton presented in the tavern scene of Passus V of *Piers Plowman* appears to be the glutton of the *Fasciculus morum* vivified. In the *Fasciculus morum* gluttony is personified; he is a man who goes to the tavern instead of the church, who seeks his table instead of the altar, and crams his belly with a superfluity food and drink instead of his mind with spiritual food.<sup>146</sup> His belly is described as abhorrent, a vile dung hill and filthy latrine.<sup>147</sup> He is referred to as the Devil's pilgrim who loses his sight and the use of his limbs through drunkenness in the Devil's temple, the tavern.<sup>148</sup> Thus gluttony is sketched in human form, packed full of moral advice. He is, however, "sketched". Langland's Glutton embodies the qualities baldly described in the handbook and brings to life its heavy-handed moralising. The

---

<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 211.

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>143</sup> Chaucer, *Canterbury Tales*, p. 196, 465-67.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.*, ll. 477-79.

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.*, l. 480. Joanne Norman has studied the ways in which the vices and virtues developed in art from abstract classical concepts to concrete human forms, wearing the clothing appropriate to their time and having a particular relevance to their contemporary audience: J. S. Norman, *Metamorphoses of an Allegory: The Iconography of the Psychomachia in Medieval Art* (Paris, 1988). See also, R. Tuve, 'Notes on the Vices and Virtues: Part I: Two Fifteenth-Century Lines of Dependence on the Thirteenth and Twelfth Centuries' *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institute* 26 (1963): 264-303; R. Tuve, 'Notes on the Vices and Virtues: Part II', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institute* 27 (1964): 42-72.

<sup>146</sup> S. Wenzel (ed.), *Fasciculus morum: A Fourteenth-Century Preacher's Handbook* (London, 1989), p. 635.

<sup>147</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>148</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 635-37.



glutton produced by Langland is by far the most vivid and elaborate of all the seven deadly sins, and the tavern scene takes the precepts from more arid moralising literature and presents them to the reader in a more attractive aesthetic form.<sup>149</sup>

The scene involving Glutton's confession begins with Glutton setting off to the church with the intention of hearing Mass and making his confession. On the way, however, he is waylaid by Beton the Brewster and ends up going into the alehouse rather than continuing to the church.<sup>150</sup> Yet, the church is not entirely forgotten. Its shade haunts the alehouse in the language used throughout the scene. For example, Glutton sits drinking until 'evensong', and the time taken for him to urinate is reckoned as a '*Paternoster-while*'.<sup>151</sup> Likewise, the discussion over who is to get possession of Clement the Cobblers' cloak has resonances of the soldiers casting lots for Christ's garments at the foot of the cross; while the passing round of the communal cup is reminiscent of Christian Communion.<sup>152</sup> Even the fact that the ale-wife refers to Glutton as 'gossib' brings to mind the idea of a godparent and hence suggests someone who is in charge of the souls of others. Thus, subtly the reader is reminded of the idea of the Devil's church found in sermon literature. Glutton is shown to be the victim of the Devil's miracles. He finds himself incapable of walking:

He myghte neither steppe ne stonde er he his staf hadde,  
And thanne gan he go like a glemannes bicche,  
Som tyme aside and some tyme arere,  
As whoso leith lynes for to lacche foweles.<sup>153</sup>

He then finds that he has become blind: 'thanne dymmed hise eighen'.<sup>154</sup> Like the Devil's pilgrim in the *Fasciculus morum*, gluttony find he has lost the use of his limbs and his eyes in the Devil's temple. By this striking dramatisation of the bald concepts

<sup>149</sup> J. Mann, 'Eating and Drinking in *Piers Plowman*', *Essays and Studies* 32 (1979): 33. James Simpson notes that the narrative of Passus V-VII is modelled on a collection of ecclesiastical forms: sermon, confession, pilgrimage, and pardon: J. Simpson, *Piers Plowman: An Introduction to the B-Text* (London, 1990), p. 64.

<sup>150</sup> Parishioners choosing to go the tavern rather than to church were a real problem for the Church. For example, in 1542 William Makyn and his wife, Katheryn, who kept a 'comon ale-hows', were charged with keeping 'lyght persons ther, bollyng and gullyng, at the divine service tyme': Hale (ed.), *A Series of Precedents and Proceedings*, p. 118.

<sup>151</sup> Langland, *Piers Plowman*, pp. 79 and 80, ll. 339 and 342.

<sup>152</sup> C. Wilcockson, 'Glutton's Black Mass: *Piers Plowman*, B-Text, Passus V 297-385', *Notes and Queries*, NS 45 (1998): 174-75.

<sup>153</sup> Langland, *Piers Plowman*, p. 80, ll. 346-49.

<sup>154</sup> *Ibid.*, l. 350.



found in sermon literature Langland allows the reader to make his own assessment of the effects of drunkenness.<sup>155</sup>

As in the *Fasciculus morum*, *Piers Plowman* expresses the vile and abhorrent nature of gluttony and the belly. Unlike the *Fasciculus morum* it does not do this by the use of simile, rather it seeks to inspire revulsion in the reader by the dramatic results of Glutton's actions. First it describes the foul fart that makes all the bystanders hold their noses.<sup>156</sup> Then comes the startlingly vivid incident of Glutton vomiting up all that he has just drunk into the lap of the Clement, who has tried to help him. His vomit is described as being so disgusting that 'noon hungry hound in Hertfordshire/ Dorste lape of that levyng, so unlovely it smaught!', an image designed to turn the stomach of the most hardened reader.<sup>157</sup> It also brings to mind the penitential motif of the dog returning to his vomit, the sinner returning to his sins, an idea singularly appropriate in a Passus dealing with the idea of penitence.<sup>158</sup> The whole scene dramatises the divisions of gluttony found in texts on the vices. For example, gluttony's close relationship with the sin of blasphemy is depicted by the presence of Grete Othes, who enters the alehouse with Glutton.<sup>159</sup> Similarly, gluttony's link with the other bodily sin, lechery, is symbolised by the presence of the prostitutes, Clarice and Pernele, in the alehouse.<sup>160</sup> Moreover, the fact that gluttony was thought to lead to other sins is illustrated by the attack of 'accidie' which besets Glutton following his drinking binge.<sup>161</sup> The various offspring of gluttony are dramatised by Glutton's actions throughout the scene: clearly he demonstrates both drunkenness and over-consumption; he also demonstrates eating at the wrong hour by choosing to drink in the alehouse when he should have been at church; the vice of delicacy is demonstrated by his desire to consume spices with his ale; even the expression 'Lat go the cuppe!' suggests over-hasty consumption.<sup>162</sup> Glutton's confession to Repentance is drawn straight from the handbooks as he names those

---

<sup>155</sup> As Gray suggests when contrasting *Piers Plowman* with Deguileville's *Pèlerinage de la vie humaine*, for Langland 'sin is not an abstract concept to be embodied in a monster which attacks man on his pilgrimage to Salvation, but the act that man himself commits in the course, and in the circumstances of his day-to-day life': N. J. Gray, 'A Study of *Piers Plowman* in Relation to the Medieval Penitential Tradition' (Unpublished PhD Diss., Cambridge University, 1984), p. 126.

<sup>156</sup> Langland, *Piers Plowman*, ll. 343-45.

<sup>157</sup> *Ibid.*, ll. 356-57.

<sup>158</sup> M. J. Toswell, 'Of Dogs, Cawdels and Contrition: A Penitential Motif in *Piers Plowman*', *Yearbook of Langland Studies* 7 (1993): 119-20.

<sup>159</sup> Langland, *Piers Plowman*, p. 78, l. 307. Schmidt does not capitalise 'grete othes'.

<sup>160</sup> *Ibid.*, ll. 313-14.

<sup>161</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 80, l. 360. This 'accidie' represents both general idleness and spiritual torpor. On the differing meanings of *acedia* see S. Wenzel, 'Acedia 700-1200', *Traditio* 22 (1966): 73-102.

<sup>162</sup> Langland, *Piers Plowman*, p. 78, 79, ll. 305-6, 337.



branches of gluttony to which the medieval penitent was expected to confess: he confesses to sins of speech, over-eating to the point of vomiting, wasting food that should have gone to the hungry, eating over-delicately, breaking fasts, and having drunk too much. Unsurprisingly, he is given the traditional penance of fasting.<sup>163</sup>

What, however, is the purpose of the scene of Glutton's repentance? Nick Gray states that the tavern-scene represents a parody of confession, which is repeated in the true confession scene with Repentance. Thus, Gray sees the scene as emphasising the importance of remorse in confession.<sup>164</sup> Jane Toswell disagrees with Gray's reading, arguing rather for the Christian content of the tavern-scene, suggesting that Langland uses the biblical idea of the dog returning to its vomit (Glutton returning to the tavern) to suggest that Glutton will no longer so transgress.<sup>165</sup> Yet neither of these readings really takes account of extreme, vivid nature of the tavern scene; both "intellectualise" the scene and in the process render it anodyne. In an article focusing on the significances of characters' names, James Simpson uses the example of Glutton in this scene to argue for the limitations of personification allegory.<sup>166</sup> Simpson suggests that despite the vivid nature of his description, Glutton is trapped within the semantic limits and institutional affiliations of his name, and thus has his actions curtailed by the possibilities of his name; following confession the narrative re-absorbs Glutton as he has no further functional use within the text: Glutton can be only a glutton. This is a convincing argument, but one which leaves modern readers, with their desire for reform, somewhat dissatisfied. The fact that Glutton is re-absorbed by the text does not mean, however, that his morally instructive nature is consumed along with the character himself. Langland, one might argue, had a foot in the camp of the reader-response theorists. The vomiting scene stirs a mimetic response in the text's audience. The sheer and absolute revulsion stimulated within the audience could (and can) only serve to inspire revulsion in the text's audience as to the effects of gluttony. The audience becomes in effect the 'hound of Hertfordshire' who is unwilling to revisit the sins of Glutton. The efficacy of the text's morally instructive capacities lies within the fact that it is able to bring life to the bare bones of instruction found within other moralising texts. Langland takes a

---

<sup>163</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 81-82, ll.368-85.

<sup>164</sup> N. Gray, 'The Clemency of Cobblers: A Reading of "Glutton's Confession" in *Piers Plowman*', *Leeds Studies in English*, NS 17 (1986): 61-75.

<sup>165</sup> Toswell, 'Of Dogs, Cawdels and Contrition', pp. 113-21.

<sup>166</sup> J. Simpson, 'Violence, Narrative and Proper Name: *Sir Degaré*, 'The Tale of Sir Gareth of Orkney' and the *Folie Tristan d'Oxford*', in A. Putter and J. Gilbert (eds.), *The Spirit of Popular Romance* (London, 2000), p. 125.



concept which would have been deeply familiar to his medieval audience and transforms it to such an extent that ~~at~~ it elicits a profound physical and emotional response. The man or woman who has lived through the experience of Langland's gluttony scene is unlikely to replicate Glutton's mistakes in a hurry. Certainly one might argue that such a scene might serve as profoundly instructive to a young apprentice who might have thought to set off down Perkyn Revelour's road to ruin.

Is it possible, however, to posit a function for literature on gluttony (and the other deadly sins) as a whole within the urban household? Undoubtedly it was in the interest of all lay men and women to know all the Christian doctrines required to save one's soul from Hell. That of itself would be cause enough for lay ownership and readership of texts on the subject of the seven deadly sins.<sup>167</sup> Consequently, information on the seven deadly sins found its way into many "everyday" books including "common-profit" books, which were intended for the religious education of the urban community, Books of Hours, and also into domestic miscellanies.<sup>168</sup> More importantly, as amongst the injunctions regarding the instruction of the laity in the episcopal constitutions of the thirteenth century was the specific request that children be instructed in all that was required to be a good Christian, material on the sins also found its way into texts aimed at children.<sup>169</sup> Thus, it is possible to see that the seven deadly sins

---

<sup>167</sup> William Caxton claims to have printed his translation of the *Somme le roi*, known as the *Royal Book*, 'atte request of a worshipful marchaunt and mercer of London': G. R. Keiser, "'Noght How Lang Man Lif; Bot How Wele": The Laity and the Ladder of Perfection', in M. G Sargent (ed.), *De cella in seculum: Religious and Secular Devotion in Late Medieval England. An Interdisciplinary Conference in Celebration of the Eighth Centenary of the Consecration of St Hugh of Avalon Bishop of Lincoln, 20-22 July, 1986* (Cambridge, 1989), p. 145.

<sup>168</sup> W. Scase, 'Reginald Pecock, John Carpenter and John Colop's "Common-Profit" Books: Aspects of Book Ownership and Circulation in Fifteenth-Century London', *Medium aevum* 61 (1992): 261-74. Lavynham's treatise on the seven deadly sins found its way into one of Colop's 'common-profit' books: Richard Lavynham, *A Litil Tretys on the Seven Deadly Sins*, ed. J. P. W. M. V. Zutphen (Rome, 1956), p. xlv. A form of confession utilising the seven deadly sins is found at the beginning and end of York Minster Library, MS Additional 2, fols. 1r-4r and 206r-10v. This text, also known as The Bolton Hours, was written for use in the diocese of York, perhaps for John Bolton the younger (d. 1445), merchant, alderman, and mercer of York: N. R. Ker and J. Piper, *Medieval Manuscripts in British Libraries IV: Paisley-York* (Oxford, 1992), p. 790. A form of confession dealing with sins against the ten commandments, the seven deadly sins, and the bodily senses, followed by penitential verses has been found amongst a collection of literature for family use: P. Durkin, 'Examining One's Conscience', 39. A study of miscellanies is to be found in J. Boffey and J. J. Thompson, 'Anthologies and Miscellanies: Production and Choice of Texts', in Griffiths and Pearsall (eds.), *Book Production and Publishing in Britain*, pp. 279-315.

<sup>169</sup> V. Gillespie, 'Doctrina and Predicacio: The Design and Function of Some Pastoral Manuals', *Leeds Studies in English*, NS 11 (1986), p. 36. The *Lay Folks' Catechism* states that the ten commandments and seven deadly sins should be taught by parishioners to their children: Simmons and Nolloth (eds.), *The Lay Folks' Catechism*, p. 22, ll. 63-64. Mirk's *Instructions* contain information for godparents regarding their duty to instruct their godchildren in the basic tenets of faith: Peacock (ed.), *Instructions for Parish Priests*, p. 5, ll. 151-54, p. 36, ll. 1161-62. Forms of confession were even developed for the use of children: S. B. Meech, 'John Drury and his English Writings (Camb. Add. Man. 2830)', *Speculum* 9 (1934): 76-79. On



would have functioned as part of basic religious instruction within the household and, in fact, would have contributed to the idea of the household as a religious unit.<sup>170</sup>

In Richard Whitford's *A Werke for Houshoulders* the particular place for this kind of religious instruction in the household is at the table at mealtimes. This text, which is concerned with how an individual's time must be accounted for on Judgement Day, suggests that times of prime importance at which one might 'fynde or perceyue any thyng that was good, vertuous and profytable' are 'brekefast, dyner, souper, or drynkyng'.<sup>171</sup> The reason for mealtimes being moments of spiritual profit arises from the fact that Whitford advocates that at 'euery mele, dyner, or souper' a member of the household should say in a 'lowde voyce' the *Pater noster*, *Ave*, and *Credo*.<sup>172</sup> The virtue of the daily reading of these prayers is so that those who 'ben aged' who don't know them well and who would otherwise be 'abasshed to lerne it openly' will, through hearing the prayers regularly, soon learn them without embarrassment.<sup>173</sup> The role of the householder in all of this is similar to that of a pastor with his congregation: he is to be present at these readings 'at the leest ones a weke' and is to allow none to escape his scrutiny, neither 'olde nor yonge'.<sup>174</sup>

The household under instruction here is clearly envisaged as composed of not only kinship members and servants but also a wider community, as the householder is advised to 'gader your neyghbours about you on the holy daye specyally the yonge sorte' in order to instruct them in religious matters.<sup>175</sup> One can see, therefore, that the table is perceived as the place for the dissemination of shared religious beliefs, and the place at which a wider sense of community can be engendered and fostered. Moreover, it is the place at which household discipline is administered and demonstrated. Stubborn

---

the religious instruction of medieval children see M. Denley, 'Elementary Teaching and Middle English Didactic Writing', in H. Phillips (ed.), *Langland, the Mystics and the Medieval Religious Tradition* (Cambridge, 1990), pp. 223-41; A. L. Harris, 'Instructional Poetry for Medieval Children', *English Studies* 74 (1993): 124-32; N. Orme, *Medieval Children* (London, 2001), pp. 200-64.

<sup>170</sup> It has been suggested that aristocratic and gentry households may have been constituted as religious communities: R. G. K. A. Mertes, 'The Household as a Religious Community', in J. Rosenthal and C. Richmond (eds.), *The Later Middle Ages* (New York, 1987), pp. 123-139. There is no reason to assume that smaller urban households could not similarly function as religious communities.

<sup>171</sup> Richard Whitford, *A Werke for Houshoulders, or for Them that Haue the Gydyng or Gouvernaunce of Ony Company: Gadred and Set Forth by a Professed Bother of Syon, Rycharde Whytforde* (London, 1530), sig. Bi. I have silently expanded contractions throughout and made minor corrections.

<sup>172</sup> *Ibid.*, sig. Biii.

<sup>173</sup> *Ibid.*, sig. Ci.

<sup>174</sup> 'I wolde aduyse & counsayle you to se, knowe & proue that euery persone in your howse & all that ben under your gouernaunce and charge can say the same & therefore you must take the laboure to here them your selfe, and where nede is to teche them', *ibid.*

<sup>175</sup> *Ibid.*, sig. Bii.



children who fail to honour their parents are to be punished in the following manner:

let them haue such sharpe & greuous punysshment as conueniently may be deuysed as to syt at dyner alone & by them self at a stole in the myddle of the hall with onely browne breed & water and euery persone by ordre to rebuke them as they wold rebuke a thefe or a traytor.<sup>176</sup>

Thus, the table is conceived as the place for the expression of communal values; it is the place where proper spiritual beliefs can be inculcated; and it is also the arena in which undesirable and destructive behaviour can be discouraged. If the table is seen as functioning as a locus of instruction, the sin of gluttony might prove a particularly useful sin through which to inculcate virtue. The text includes a form of confession; the section on gluttony reads as follows:

I haue also synned in glotony in takyng meet and drynke vndiscretely & aboue that nature dyd require and haue pycked out and chosen (sometyme by sensual appetyte) the delycate, swete and plesaunt meetes and drynks rather for pleasure than for nede & taken there suche superfluite (at some tymes) that I haue ben therby sycke and diseased or at the leest be the more dull bothe in body & soule vnto alle maner of vertue & good exercyses. (Loke here whether you haue broken any fastes commaunded by the lawe, or ben drunken, or taken any notable surfet) After meet communely I haue ben more redy to passe the tyme in bodyly disportes and ydlenes than in labours. I crye god mercy.<sup>177</sup>

By showing restraint in these areas while at the table the individual would be able to demonstrate his/ her own strivings toward virtue. Moreover, by encouraging virtuous eating practices and reprimanding gluttonous tendencies in those around the table the householder could exercise his role as the spiritual head of the household.<sup>178</sup> The table was the site at which both household and spiritual rules, which ensure the smooth-running of the household and society, could be enforced, and it is the place at which the entire household came together to ensure precisely that smooth-running.<sup>179</sup> Given, as suggested by Sarah Rees Jones, the centrality of the household to the efficiency of civic rule, it is unsurprising that a communal locus of discipline and instruction within the household should be chosen to reinforce shared values.<sup>180</sup>

<sup>176</sup> *Ibid.*, sig. Diii.

<sup>177</sup> *Ibid.*, sig. Ev-Evi.

<sup>178</sup> Several forms of confession are extant which are directed at the householder: Durkin, 'Examining One's Conscience', pp. 36-37.

<sup>179</sup> Within the monastic context restricted diet was similarly used to control the disobedience of monastics. See, for example, A. Hamilton. Thompson (ed.), *Visitations of Religious Houses in the Diocese of Lincoln*, vol. 2, Lincoln Record Society 14 (1918), pp. 12, 88.

<sup>180</sup> S. Rees Jones, 'Household, Work and the Problem of Mobile Labour: The Regulation of Labour in Medieval English Towns', in J. Bothwell, P. J. P. Goldberg, and W. M. Ormrod (eds.), *The Problem of Labour in Fourteenth Century England* (Woodbridge, 2000), pp. 133-53; S. Rees Jones, 'The Household



Such a model of the household draws upon monastic practices, in which activities within the refectory were regarded as an integral part of the monastic lifestyle of spiritual instruction and growth. For example, we find in a description of the frater house at Durham that its status as a place of religious instruction is evident through the way in which it mirrors the layout of the church itself, with the presence on the east wall of 'a fair large picture of our Saviour Christ, the blessed Virgin Mary and Saint John, in fine gilt work, and excellent colours'.<sup>181</sup> More literal religious instruction took the form of readings from the Bible:

one of the Novices ... dyd reade summe parte of the Old and New Testament, in Latten, in dyner tyme, having a convenyent place at the southe end of the hie table with in a faire glasse wyndowe, invyroned with iron, and certaine steppes of stone with iron rayles of th'one syde to goe up to it, and to support an iron deske there placed, upon which laie the Holie Bible.<sup>182</sup>

The whole of the mealtime was encapsulated within the envelope of religious ritual with Grace being said at the beginning and end of the meal.<sup>183</sup> Thus just as the physical body was sustained through the ingestion of food, so the soul was nourished through the ingestion of the Word of God. In addition, the dining rituals within the frater at Durham were used to foster a sense of community spirit through the sharing of the 'Grace-Cup' which 'did service to the monks every day, after grace was said, to drink it round the table', and the use of the 'Judas-Cup' by the whole household on Maundy Thursday.<sup>184</sup> Thus, the monastic refectory would have played a part, alongside the common regime of religious offices and manual labour, in contributing towards the sense of striving towards a common spiritual goal.<sup>185</sup>

---

in English Urban Government in the Later Middle Ages', in M. Carlier and T. Soens (eds.), *The Household in Late Medieval Cities: Italy and Northwestern Europe Compared. Proceedings of the International Conference Ghent, 21<sup>st</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> January 2000* (Louvain, 2001), pp. 71-87.

<sup>181</sup> J. Raine (ed.), *A Description or Briefe Declaration of All the Ancient Monuments, Rites, and Customes Belonginge or Beinge within the Monastical Church of Durham Before the Suppression Written in 1598*, Surtees Society 15 (1842), p. 68.

<sup>182</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 69. This description of the reader's pulpit shows the ways in which monastic dining was influenced by secular architecture as this pulpit appears to resemble the oriel windows which were sometimes added to secular halls in the fifteenth century to draw attention to the high table. This window in the south wall near the steps of the dais was added to the Durham frater c. 1500 along with a central hearth, perhaps as part of rebuilding programme designed to bring the frater up to date with secular halls: E. Gee, 'Discoveries in the Frater at Durham', *Archaeological Journal* 123 (1966): 72, 76-77.

<sup>183</sup> Raine (ed.), *The Rites of Durham*, pp. 68 and 70.

<sup>184</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 68.

<sup>185</sup> For a discussion of the ideals and realities of medieval monastic dining behaviour see S. Wells, 'The Social Meanings of Food in Later Medieval England' (Unpublished MA Diss., York University, 1999).



The reflection of these monastic practices can be clearly seen in the rituals of dining found within the so-called 'Instructions for a Devout and Literate Layman'.<sup>186</sup> This text is directed towards the instruction of the urban householder, probably in London, and covers information on behaviour from rising in the morning to going to bed at night.<sup>187</sup> It was noted above that the only correct way of eating that ensured the avoidance of gluttony was with God in mind all the while; this text puts these instructions into practice. The prayers which the lay man says to himself are conceived as a form of spiritual food: he is instructed to return from the chapel to the house with nothing in his heart and mouth except 'Hail Mary full of Grace the Lord is with thee', and whilst sat at the table he is to ruminate on the words 'Hail Mary'. Similarly, whenever he takes a drink at the table he is to take simultaneously spiritual sustenance by saying in his heart, 'In the name of the Father' and making the sign of the cross at the table.<sup>188</sup> If he finds on returning home that his dinner is not ready he is to go to that room and say a further fifty of Our Lady.<sup>189</sup> There is here, just as in the monastic refectory, a sense of the inter-relation of food and the Word of God, between physical and spiritual sustenance; prayer is seen as possessing a nourishing capacity similar to that of food. As at Durham, the ritual of the table is set within a frame-work of religious devotion, with Grace being said standing at the beginning and end of the meal. Moreover, religious readings are similarly central to the dining experience, as the Bible is to be brought to the table as readily as the bread and there are to be spiritual readings by members of the family at the table to avoid idle chatter.<sup>190</sup> The figure of Dives is brought to mind as a reminder of the punishments that will be inflicted on those who

---

<sup>186</sup> This unique text is written on both sides of a narrow strip of parchment in Latin in an early fifteenth-century hand. It is printed in Latin with an English translation in W. A. Pantin, 'Instructions for a Devout and Literate Layman', in J. J. G. Alexander and M. T. Gibson (eds.), *Medieval Learning and Literature: Essays Presented to Richard William Hunt* (Oxford, 1976), pp. 398-400, and 420-22.

<sup>187</sup> Pantin suggests that the text may have been written for either Thomas Throckmorton (d. 1414) or John Throckmorton (d. 1445), both of whom spent a lot of time in London and may have had a house there: *ibid.*, p. 402.

<sup>188</sup> 'et tunc eundo ad hospicium nichil aliud in corde nec in ore nisi: Ave Maria gracia plena Dominus tecum; aliquando totum, aliquando tantum: Ave Maria. Illa duo verba vel usque ad medium, aliquando in finem, ruminetis in mente, cum sedetis in mensa. Et omni vice quando potabitis in mensa dicatis in corde: In nomine Patris, ut supra. Extra mensam faciatis signum cum manu': *Ibid.*, p. 421.

<sup>189</sup> 'Si prandium non sit paratum cum veneritis domi, eatis in casam illam et dicatis aliam quinquagem de Domina': *ibid.*

<sup>190</sup> 'Cum prandendum fuerit et eciam post prandium dicatis gracias stando. Eque cito deferatur liber ad mensam sicut panis. Et ne lingua proferat vana seu nociva, legatur nunc ab uno, nunc ab alio, et a filiis statim cum sciant legere': *ibid.*



misuse their tongues.<sup>191</sup> The inter-relation of physical and spiritual sustenance finds concrete form in the bread on the table. There are the inevitable associations between the bread at the Mass and that consumed at the dinner table, which is reinforced to some degree by its comparison with the book from which the scriptural readings are read and thus spiritual sustenance obtained. There is a sense that just as the priest supervises the ritual of the Mass, so the male householder officiates over mealtime rituals, orchestrating behaviour and guiding the 'laity' (other members of his family). This elision of the altar and the table is completed by the cross made on the table out of five bread crumbs, which is shown secretly to the virtuous wife.<sup>192</sup> The food at the table is used in real terms to form the ultimate Christian symbol, and used to inspire the wife to religious devotion.

It is clear, therefore, in this conception of the urban household that the table is seen as central to the religious instruction of the household, and that gluttony functions as a useful sin in that instruction through its ostentatious avoidance. Yet it is doubtful as to what degree these texts might reflect real practices in urban households. Richard Whitford, the 'professed brother of Syon', is writing from a religious background and perhaps would have had in his mind an ideal much more suited to the monastic refectory than to the secular urban household. The author of the 'Instructions', although apparently a secular priest, in many ways seems even more extreme in his advice than Whitford.<sup>193</sup> Gluttony does, however, appear to have found a comfortable and practical home in courtesy texts.<sup>194</sup> Anti-gluttonous behaviour here is transformed into the form good manners. Paradoxically, it is these good manners which allow the eating of

<sup>191</sup> '*et cogitetis de divite nebulone cruciato apud inferos in lingua magis quam aliis membris*': *ibid.* The text also suggests that '*cena*' should follow the same model as '*prandium*', and that it should be brief '*breviter*' and that guzzling should be avoided '*ne ingurgiteris*': *ibid.*

<sup>192</sup> '*Poteritis facere crucem in mensa de quinque micis, set nullus hoc videat excepta uxore; que quanto magis silens et virtuosa; tanto cordialis in Christo diligenda*': *ibid.*

<sup>193</sup> See the advice given for if the Layman meets a dog in the street: '*Domine laceret me, interficiat me; multo melior me est ista bestia; ipsa nunquam peccavit. Ego post tantam gratiam provocavi te. Verti ad te tergum et non faciem, et nichil boni feci, set omnia mala. Ve michi, Welawey*'; 'Lord let it bite me, let it kill me; this beast is much better than I; it has never sinned. I after so much grace have provoked you; I have turned my back on you and not my face, and I have done nothing good, but all ill. Woe is me. Welawey': *ibid.*, pp. 420, 399. On the authorship of the text see *ibid.*, pp. 400-1.

<sup>194</sup> See, for example, F. J. Furnivall (ed.), *Caxton's Book of Curtesye Printed at Westminster about 1477-78 AD*, EETS, ES 3 (1868; repr 1973), p. 19, ll. 176-82. In Trevisa's translation of *de regimine principum* gluttony is used to instruct the young nobleman in restraint and self-control, those attributes essential for lordship: John Trevisa, *The Governance of Kings and Princes: John Trevisa's Middle English Translation of the De regimine principum of Aegidius of Rome*, ed. D. C. Fowler et al. (London, 1997), pp. 230-33. This text makes use of Gregory the Great's definition of gluttony and also Aristotle's teaching on temperance. On its sources see C. F. Briggs, *Giles of Rome's De regimine principum: Reading and Writing Politics at Court and University, c. 1275-c. 1525* (Cambridge, 1999). I discuss the importance of self-control in the next chapter.



quantities and qualities of food which would by theological standards be considered gluttonous. Thus it is in the household that the seemingly incompatible tensions between civic ideas of plenty and religious ideas of excess find their resolution in ideas of hospitality and good manners. In my concluding chapter, therefore, I intend to examine the concept of sociability in the urban environment.



## Hospitality: Social and Convivial Aspects of Food and Eating

### Introduction

The model of the city delineated in Chapter 2 is one in which a luxurious abundance of food is central to the political well-being of the city. By contrast, in Chapter 3, the reverse situation is observed in the desires of the Church for austerity and restraint in eating habits, with spiritual concerns remaining paramount. These two conceptions of food and eating appear to be entirely incompatible, and yet I would argue that it is in ideas of hospitality and conviviality, such as were gestured towards in my reading of Lydgate's 'Dietary' in Chapter 1, that some sort of resolution to these contradictions is reached. The dining table we left at the end of the last chapter was one of discipline and instruction; the dining table was also, however, a place for intimacy, kinship, and fellowship, at both the level of the individual household and also in the context of wider civic conviviality. In this chapter I intend to look at different kinds of hospitality within the medieval city in order to see to what extent established models of aristocratic dining fit urban dining practices, and also to consider how the competing desires for intimacy, privacy, and conviviality are accommodated in the urban context.

In *The Castle of Labour*, printed by Richard Pynson in 1505, the hard life of labour experienced by the man in the Castle of Labour is juxtaposed with the leisure, relaxation, and nurturing to be found in the House of Rest.<sup>1</sup> The House of Rest is characterised by both warmth and the provisioning of food by the labourer's wife. Earlier in the text the labourer has eaten with his fellow labourers, but this food is meagre in substance, consisting of rye bread and water, and is not accompanied by a break from work. Indeed the woodcut which accompanies this section of the text shows labourers working with one hand and eating with the other.<sup>2</sup> In many ways these depictions of the working man eating and the man at rest eating are very reminiscent of

---

<sup>1</sup> This text, a dream-allegory about the perils of idleness, is a translation, attributed to Alexander Barclay, of a French text by Pierre Gringore, based on Jean Bryant's *Le chemin de povreté et de richesse*.

<sup>2</sup> Alexander Barclay, *The Castle of Labour* (London, 1505), sig. Hv. There is an example in the Bedfordshire Coroners' Rolls of a labourer eating whilst working, in a case in which a man digging under the walls of an old dovecote was killed when the walls collapsed on top of him. The accident was discovered when the man's wife brought breakfast out to him: P. J. P. Goldberg (ed. and trans.), *Women in England c. 1275-1525: Documentary Sources* (Manchester, 1995), p. 135. The intention of this text is to encourage the individual to work hard, and as such resembles the work ethic espoused by employers in the medieval period. For example, the rules for conduct of the masons working for York Minster in 1370 limits the amount of time the masons can spend away from their workplace, the lodge, when taking their midday meal break, and states that in the afternoon, when they take their drink break, they are to remain in the lodge to take their drink: J. Raine (ed.), *The Fabric Rolls of York Minster with an Appendix of Illustrative Documents*, Surtees Society 35 (1858), pp. 181-82.



the Roman distinction between *prandium* and *cena*.<sup>3</sup> For the Romans, *prandium* lacked luxury and ceremony; it was the meal of Roman men engaged in war, politics, or any activity that required effort. It was purely a response to individual need and as such reflected each person's character and moral qualities; to live on very little was a sign of a great man with a noble soul (although, of course, this was only the case if the alternative *cena*, the luxurious banquet amongst friends, was also regularly enjoyed).<sup>4</sup> This Roman idea of the frugal appetite of the fighting man was kept alive in the Middle Ages in military manuals, based on Vegetius' *De re militari*, which suggested that ideal soldier should be happy to eat little and shun luxury in everyday life.<sup>5</sup> This depiction of the man in the Castle of Labour eating whilst working could, therefore, be seen as the man occupying his proper masculine role in society as the working man.

By contrast, the House of Rest, the reward of the properly masculine working man, is removed from all labour, and the food consumed there is of a higher, though not lavish, quality: bread, wine, potage, and a little flesh. More importantly, however, the House of Rest is characterised by an intimacy between husband and wife, which is realised at the table.<sup>6</sup> In the House, where the labourer rests 'familyerly nat as a

<sup>3</sup> It is also reminiscent of the distinction drawn by Mary Douglas between the snack and the main meal, in which the snack is an unstructured food event, lacking rules of combination and sequence, as compared with the meal, which is a structured food event, a social occasion where food is eaten according to rules concerning time, place and sequence of action: M. Douglas, 'Deciphering a Meal', in *Implicit Meanings: Essays in Anthropology* (London, 1975), pp. 249-75.

<sup>4</sup> F. Dupont, 'The Grammar of Roman Dining', in J.-L. Flandrin and M. Montanri (eds.), *Food: A Culinary History From Antiquity to the Present* (New York, 1999), pp. 124-26; specifically on the diet of Roman soldiers see C. A. Déry, 'Food and The Roman Army: Travel, Transport and Transmission (with Particular Reference to the Province of Britannia)', in H. Walker (ed.), *Food on the Move: Proceedings of the Oxford Symposium on Food and Cookery 1996* (Totnes, 1997), pp. 84-96.

<sup>5</sup> D. Bornstein, *Mirrors Of Courtesy* (Connecticut, 1975), pp. 30-45; William Caxton, *The Book of Fayttes of Armes and Chyvalrye: Translated and Printed by William Caxton from the French Original by Christine de Pizan*, ed. A. T. P. Bayliss, EETS, OS 189 (1937), pp. 38-39, 43-54; R. W. Kaeuper and E. Kennedy, *The Book of Chivalry of Geoffroi de Charny: Text, Context, and Translation* (Philadelphia, 1996), pp. 110-113, 122-25, 174-76.

<sup>6</sup> Barclay, *The Castle of Labour*, sig. liii. This idea of the working man returning home to the wife who is devoted to keeping her husband well-clothed, well-fed, warm, and sexually satisfied is clearly stated in *Le Mesnagier de Paris*: 'Et pour ce que aux hommes est la cure et soing des besonges de dehors, et en doivent les mariz songer, aler, venir et racourir deça et dela par pluyes, par vens, par neges, par gresles, une foiz moullié, une foiz sec, une foiz suant, autresfoiz tramblant, mal peu, mal hebergié, mal chaussié, mal couchié - et tout ne luy fait du mal pour ce qu'il est resconforté de l'esperance qu'il a aux cures que la femme prendra de luy a son retour, aux aises, aux joyes et aux plaisirs qu'elle luy fera, ou fera faire devant elle: d'estre deschaux a bon feu, d'estre lavé les piedz, avoir chausses et soullenz fraiz, bien peu, bien abeuvi, bien servy, bien seignoury, bien couché en blans draps et cueuvrechiez blans, bien couvert de bonnes fourrures, et assouvy d'autre joyes at asbatemens, privetez, amours et secretz dont je me taiz. Et l'endemain robes-linges et vestements nouveaulx' (the cares and troubles of outside business lie with men; husbands are required to come and go, to travel here and there, in rain, wind, snow, hail, now drenched, now dry, now sweating, now shivering, ill-fed, , ill-lodged, ill-warmed, ill-bedded. And all this does him no harm because he is maintained by the hope that he has of the care he will receive at the hands of his wife on his return, and of the ease, the joys and pleasures which she will do him, or cause to be done



stranger', the wife dresses his supper. The wood-cut which accompanies this section of the text shows the table covered with cloths and, in the corner of the room, a hanging ewer and basin with a towel; while the wife ladles out potage from a cooking pot a dog sits expectantly in front of the table, clearly anticipating scraps. The text describes the husband and wife eating their meal together at the table in a comfortable and intimate fashion: 'My wyfe sat on the other syde/ After my custome and old usage'. Following the meal, when the wife has 'voyded the table clene', this sense of intimacy is continued as the couple sit close together with the wife's head resting upon the shoulder of her husband. Thus, the evening meal is constructed as a time and place of warmth, rest, comfort, and marital bliss, in which the hard-working husband is rewarded by the dutiful, loving attentions of his domestically competent wife.<sup>7</sup>

This literary representation of medieval domestic bliss has, of course, its own spiritual agenda; it wishes to depict the life of virtuous labour being rewarded by rest and relaxation, a reward ultimately to be replicated at the eternal feast in heaven. The concern of the text is not to present an image of everyday reality. I intend, therefore, to spend a little time examining some of the evidence of the architectural environment and material culture of the medieval home in order to see if it is possible to gain some sense of the everyday realities of urban dining practices.

### Urban Dining Practices

The first major study of medieval urban housing was undertaken by W. A. Pantin in the 1960s.<sup>8</sup> His approach to urban housing was quite straightforward: for Pantin, the town house represented quite simply an adaptation of rural building traditions; his primary concern was a consideration of how the rural manor-house was adapted to urban conditions. His study concentrated on medium-sized dwellings, ignoring both the smallest houses, which developed vertically, and the very largest,

---

to him in her presence: to be unshod before a roaring fire, to have his feet washed and fresh shoes and hose, to be given good food and drink, to be well served and looked after, well bedded in white sheets and a white night-cap, well covered with good furs, and assuaged with other joys and entertainments, privities, loves, and secrets of which I am silent. And on the next day to be given fresh shirts and clothes): G. E. Brereton and J. M. Ferrier (eds.), *Le Mesnagier de Paris* (Paris, 1994), 294-97; my translation.

<sup>7</sup> For an illuminating study of urban domestic intimacy see F. Riddy, 'Looking Closely: Authority and Intimacy in the Late-Medieval Urban Home', in M. Erler and M. Kowaleski (eds.), *Gendering the Master Narrative* (Ithaca, forthcoming). My analysis of the *Castle of Labour* was developed before my reading of this study.

<sup>8</sup> W. A. Pantin, 'Medieval English Town-House Plans', *Medieval Archaeology* 6-7 (1962-63): 202-39; W. A. Pantin, 'Some Medieval English Town Houses: A Study in Adaptation', in I. LL. Foster and L. Alcock (eds.), *Culture and Environment: Essays in Honour of Cyril Fox* (London, 1963), pp. 445-78.



which allowed the full implementation of the rural manor-house plan.<sup>9</sup> This concentration on the rural manor-house plan resulted in him taking the open hall, the dining area, as the starting point for his classification. His types were classified according to the orientation of the hall in relation to the street and he produced two major types: parallel and right-angle halls. The parallel hall made use of the traditional linear disposition of service areas, hall, and private chambers; the right-angle hall, an adaptation to the urban problem of insufficient street frontage, turned the building through ninety degrees so that the gable end faced the street. Thus, so far as Pantin's typology is concerned, within the medieval city, the centre of the house was, as in the rural manor-house, the hall.

John Schofield produced a more advanced typology of urban housing based on the detailed plans produced by Ralph Treswell.<sup>10</sup> From his work on these plans Schofield produced a typology of housing consisting of four major types. His typology is more extensive than Pantin's as he includes the one-room house plan, type 1, in which the problem of accommodating a shop and hall was solved by simply piling one on top of the other, as is also true of type 2 houses which had two rooms on the ground floor and went up for three or more storeys.<sup>11</sup> More importantly, although Schofield's typology includes the hall, it is not central to it in the way it is in Pantin's work; he is more concerned to classify in terms of the number of rooms, probably because his work draws on plans from the later period, when the hall was falling into disuse and one might expect a greater subdivision of rooms.<sup>12</sup> What both these typologies tell us,

---

<sup>9</sup> Pantin, 'Medieval English Town-House Plans', p. 202.

<sup>10</sup> J. Schofield, *Medieval London Houses* (London, 1994). See also J. Schofield, *The Building of London: From the Conquest to the Great Fire*, revised edn. (London, 1993); J. Schofield, 'Social Perceptions of Space in Medieval and Tudor London Houses', in M. Locock (ed.), *Meaningful Architecture: Social Interpretations of Buildings* (Aldershot, 1994), pp. 188-206. Treswell was a London surveyor who undertook major commissions for Christ's Hospital and the Clothworkers' Company between 1607 and 1612.

<sup>11</sup> York has an existing row of medieval single-cell houses in Lady Row in Goodramgate; see J. Grenville, *Medieval Housing* (London, 1997), pp. 190-93. Although designated as low-status housing, Grenville suggests that these single-cell rows are unlikely to represent the bottom end of housing stock and that far less salubrious accommodation would have been available in the suburbs: *ibid.*, p. 193. Certainly in London the Coroners Rolls record families not only working together in a single-room shop but also living and sleeping in there. For example, in 1326 the wife of John Ryvet perished in a fire caused by an overturned lighted candle in their shop in which both she and her husband were sleeping: R. R. Sharpe (ed.), *Calendar of Coroners Rolls of the City of London AD 1300-1378* (London, 1913), p. 171. In 1337 Matilda le Cambester and her baby daughter Margery similarly perished in her shop in which they were sleeping: *ibid.*, p. 183.

<sup>12</sup> Grenville, *Medieval Housing*, pp. 169-71. A recent article by Roger Leech has considered the ways in which in the early-modern period the hall fell out of practical use and developed a primarily symbolic function: R. H. Leech, 'The Symbolic Hall: Historical Context and Merchant Culture in the Early Modern City', *Vernacular Architecture* 31 (2000): 1-10. Although I do not dispute his findings for the early-



however, is that the medieval built environment provided many urban inhabitants with a designated dining arena.<sup>13</sup>

As is clear from the discussion of cooked-food provision in Chapter 2, the food which appeared on the table in the medieval urban home might take a variety of forms and may or may not have been produced using the house's own cooking facilities. Just as the study of cooking arrangements can be facilitated by the study of medieval inventories, so a much clearer picture of the functions and perceptions of the medieval hall emerges if inventories of the items found within halls are considered.<sup>14</sup> The first thing one notices when examining medieval inventories is the fact that in the vast majority of cases the hall is the first room to be inventoried. This would suggest a mentality (similar to that of Pantin) which affords the hall primary importance within the house-structure.<sup>15</sup> Some idea of what might have been thought of as the "ideal" contents of a medieval hall can be gained from a somewhat unusual source: a school exercise-book. Amongst a collection of fifteenth-century Latin-English vocabularies, designed for use by teachers in schools to teach children Latin vocabulary, is a list of the items one might expect to find in a medieval hall. This list suggests that there should be a 'borde' and 'treste' [put-away table], a 'banquere' [bench cover], a 'dorsur' [ornamental cloth for covering the back of a chair], a 'tabulle dormawnd' [permanent table], a 'basyn', a 'laworre' [wash basin], a 'fyr', a 'harthe', a 'brande', an 'awndyren' [a firedog], a 'langsedyll' [long seat, settle], a 'chayere', a 'tangges' [pair of tongs], a 'bynke' [bench], a stole, a 'cosyn' [cushion], 'wode for the fire', a 'pare belows', and a 'screne'.<sup>16</sup> As in the *Castle of Labour*, the warmth provided by the fire seems to be

---

modern period, I think he is mistaken in applying them to the later Middle Ages, as my own analysis of inventory material will show.

<sup>13</sup> The multifunctional use of space within houses will be considered later in this chapter. It is difficult to discover anything about those urban inhabitants who lived perhaps many in a single room and clearly had no separate dining or cooking areas, as their lowly status means that they are largely absent from the written record.

<sup>14</sup> A study of early modern inventories for houses in Norwich has been made by U. Priestly, P. J. Corfield, and H. Sutermeister, 'Rooms and Room Use in Norwich Housing, 1580-1730', *Post-Medieval Archaeology* 16 (1982): 93-123. This study notes the decline of the use of the hall as a living and dining space, finally being reduced to an entrance space furnished for decoration rather than utility: pp. 104-6.

<sup>15</sup> If one performs access analysis on medieval house plans it is clear that this ordering is unlikely to be because the hall was the first room that was entered. Derek Portman notes in his study of housing in early-modern Oxford that the hall was regarded as the most important part of the building, with the hall often being referred to as the 'house' or 'dwelling house': D. Portman, 'Vernacular Buildings in the Oxford Region in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries', in C. W. Chalkin and M. A. Havinden (eds.), *Rural Change and Urban Growth, 1500-1800: Essays in English Regional History in Honour of W. G. Hoskins* (London, 1972), pp. 156-57.

<sup>16</sup> T. Wright, *Anglo-Saxon and Old English Vocabularies. Volume 1: Vocabularies*, ed. R. P. Wülker, 2<sup>nd</sup> end. (1884; repr. Darmstadt, 1968), pp. 656-57.



central to the concept of the hall. The permanent focal point of the room appears to have been the fireplace, with all other furniture being generally moveable. Thus, the hall appears to have been equipped as a multi-functional space.

If inventories of actual houses are compared with this “ideal” inventory a number of similarities can be seen. For example, the fourteenth-century inventory for the famous London wine merchant and alderman, Richard Lyons, records in the hall: a dorsal, 2 costers [wall hangings], a bench cover, 2 boards and 2 pairs of trestles, a forme, a settle, a small gaming table, a hanging candle-holder, 5 small candlesticks, a screen, a cupboard, and a leaden wash-bowl.<sup>17</sup> In addition there is a separate entry for napery which records several towels of various qualities, tablecloths and many other items of ‘diuerse naparie’.<sup>18</sup> From the listing of rooms in the inventory one gets the sense of a house which in layout might not have been dissimilar to that built by the wealthy London tallow-chandler, Richard Willysdon, in the late fourteenth century, for which a detailed lease survives.<sup>19</sup> The layout of the chambers, hall, and service areas (buttery, pantry, kitchen, and larder) probably followed the traditional linear layout, which suggests a gradation of low to high status and may have allowed food to be brought to the table with a degree of ceremony. The cupboard was probably used to demonstrate Lyons’ wealth with a display of plate, and some measure of ritual may have been introduced in the washing of the hands using the leaden-wash bowl and items of napery.<sup>20</sup> Moreover, there is a sense that the hall could be adapted to fit various situations: the use of the wall hangings and lighting on less formal occasions could have been used to create a sense of warmth and intimacy, with the screen being used to carefully subdivide space within the hall.

The 1449 inventory of Thomas Morton, canon residentiary at York, records a similar sort of picture. His hall is recorded as containing: a halling [tapestry] with 2 costers of green and red say [a fine-textured cloth] impaled with the arms of Archbishop Bowet of York, an old halling of red say with the arms of St Peter in the middle, 2 costers and a cupboard cloth of the same, 2 green and red striped bankers, 12 cushions

---

<sup>17</sup> A. R. Myers, ‘The Wealth of Richard Lyons’, in T. A. Sandquist and M. R. Powicke (ed.), *Essays in Medieval History Presented to Bertie Wilkinson* (Toronto, 1969), pp. 307-8.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 313.

<sup>19</sup> The lease is transcribed in C. L. Kingsford, ‘A London Merchant’s House and Its Owners, 1360-1614’, *Archaeologia*, second series 24 (1923-24): 155. A ground plan of the building is on p. 149.

<sup>20</sup> The paraphernalia of hand-washing may have had additional significance as towels and ewers seem to have been taken into churches at baptisms for the godparents to use for the washing of their hands during the baptism ceremony. See Goldberg (ed.), *Women in England*, p. 68.



of green woollen cloth woven with eagles, 11 blue cushions, 2 boards for the table of the ‘*dominus*’ and 3 pairs of wooden trestles, 2 tables dormant, 2 long benches, 2 wooden chairs, 4 wooden stools, wooden cupboard, 2 andirons with rams heads, a pair of tongs, an iron fork, 3 basins, 3 brass ewers, a large chauffer, a small bronze chauffer, and a wooden screen.<sup>21</sup> The contents of the pantry include the napery, amongst which are found various tablecloths, some designated for the use of the ‘*dominus*’, towels for the use of the ‘*dominus*’, other items of napery, and a cloth for the cupboard.<sup>22</sup> Here it seems to be quite clear that, at least on certain occasions, dining in the hall of Thomas Morton would have entailed a great deal of ceremony and ritual, in which Morton, or perhaps a higher-status ecclesiastical guest, would have been the centre of attention. Within the inventory there seems to be a clear distinction between the ‘high’ table and the other tables, which is echoed in the napery which would be used at each of the tables. Dining in the Morton household would have been carefully orchestrated to ensure the distinctions of social hierarchy were maintained.

The houses of Richard Lyons and Thomas Morton were clearly of very high status. Is there any evidence to suggest that dining rituals took place lower down the social ladder, in properties which would be classified by Schofield as type 2? If one looks at inventories of smaller properties in York in fact one sees a similar picture on a smaller scale.<sup>23</sup> For example, the inventory of Geoffrey and Idonea Couper (1402), for a property with a hall, store-room, chamber, and kitchen, records basins and ewers, tablecloths, and towels.<sup>24</sup> Likewise, the inventory of Hugh de Grantham, mason (1410), for a property with a hall, chamber, storeroom, kitchen, and brewhouse, records the presence of basins and ewers, a hanging basin, various tablecloths, several towels, as well as pieces of silver plate.<sup>25</sup> The inventory of Robert Talkan, girdler (1415), for a property consisting of a hall, a chamber, a store-room, a kitchen, and a brew-house, includes fine plate (including ewers and basins), standing and hanging basins and ewers,

<sup>21</sup> P. M. Stell and L. Hampson (eds.), *Probate Inventories of the York Diocese 1350-1500* (York, 1999), p. 160.

<sup>22</sup> The inventory of William Duffield, another canon residentiary (1452), shows a similar concern for hierarchy of napery; the contents of his pantry at York contained a superior tablecloth for the table of the ‘*dominus*’ of twill woven with *fleur-de-lis*, several other tablecloths designated for the ‘*dominus*’, towels for the table of the ‘*dominus*’, towels of different sizes for washing before meals, ewery cloths, napkins, tablecloths for the second tables, and towels for the second table: *ibid.*, pp. 201-2.

<sup>23</sup> Examples of similar inventories for London can be found in *CPMR, 1364-1381*, pp. 90-92, 154-56, 158-59; *CPMR, 1381-1412*, pp. 209-14; *CPMR, 1413-1432*, pp. 2-5.

<sup>24</sup> Stell and Hampson (eds.), *Probate Inventories*, pp. 43-44.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 61-62.



tablecloths, and towels.<sup>26</sup> The inventory of Thomas Baker, Stringer (1436), for a property containing a hall, chamber, kitchen, and shop, includes basins, ewers, towels, and tablecloths.<sup>27</sup> To the modern mind, which is used to the idea of the acquisition of innumerable material possessions, the presence of these items for use in dining ritual can seem insignificant. However, if one considers the general sparseness with which the medieval house was furnished, their presence takes on increasing significance.

The reason articles such as napkins, tablecloths, and basins and ewers may be thought of as possessing potentially ritual significance is because they were utilised in dining rituals in aristocratic households. It has been possible for researchers to construct a model of aristocratic dining practice as a consequence of the wealth of material evidence and the existence of high-status courtesy texts. Recently scholars have become interested in the ways in which the architectural environment is related to the ordering of human relationships.<sup>28</sup> Amos Rapoport, in his study of architecture and behaviour in modern societies, proposes a reciprocal relationship between human activities and the built environment, in which buildings not only contain but also manipulate human activities.<sup>29</sup> He suggests that cues to behaviour are provided by fixed-feature elements (e.g., walls and floors), semi-fixed-feature elements (e.g., furnishings), and non-fixed-feature elements (e.g., people and their actions).<sup>30</sup> When applied to the Middle Ages and the medieval great hall, it can be seen that these feature elements cohered to reinforce the status of the head of the household. At the high, exclusive end of the hall occupied by the lord, the lord's table was often placed upon a raised dais, becoming quite literally a "high" table, the importance of his position being emphasised by the presence of a canopy above where he sat.<sup>31</sup> Nearby was the cupboard, perhaps draped with expensive

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 73-74.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 124-25. Many other inventories in this collection record plate and napery in their contents.

<sup>28</sup> See, for example, B. Hillier and J. Hanson, *The Social Logic of Space* (Cambridge, 1984); S. Kent, 'Activity Areas and Architecture: An Interdisciplinary Study of the Relationship Between the Use of Space and Domestic Built Environments', in S. Kent (ed.), *Domestic Architecture and the Use of Space* (Cambridge, 1990), pp. 1-8; M. Locock, 'Meaningful Architecture', in M. Locock (ed.), *Meaningful Architecture: Social Interpretations of Buildings* (Aldershot, 1994), pp. 1-13.

<sup>29</sup> A. Rapoport, 'Systems of Activities and Systems of Settings', in Kent (ed.), *Domestic Architecture and the Use of Space*, pp. 9-20.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13.

<sup>31</sup> Grenville, *Medieval Housing*, pp. 89-90. In *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* Guinevere's place on the dais is marked by the presence of 'a selure hir over/ Of tryed Tolouse, of Tars tapites innoughe,/ That were embrawd and beten wyth the best gemmes': J. J. Anderson (ed.), *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, Pearl, Cleanness, Patience* (London, 1996), p. 170, ll. 76-78. Halls often had central open hearths, although fireplaces and chimneys had come into use on the continent in the eleventh century and were common in town houses by the twelfth century. Such a deliberate archaism is perhaps indicative of a "mythology" which linked aristocratic halls with the illustrious halls found in literary texts: M. Thompson, *The Medieval Hall: The Basis of Secular Domestic Life, 600-1600 AD* (Aldershot, 1995), p. 101. For a



cloths or decorated with a carved canopy, which contained a display of fine plate.<sup>32</sup> The high table functioned both to ensure the visibility of the head of the household and to allow the observation of all the guests in the hall. The fifteenth-century adaptation of Bishop Grosseteste's *Household Statutes* states that the whole household should eat together in the hall and instructs the lord to 'syttē 3e euer in the myddul of the hye borde, that youre fysegge and chere be schewyd to alle men of bothe partyes, and that 3e may see ly3htly the seruicis and defawtis'.<sup>33</sup> The visible presence of the lord thus acted on two levels to ensure control over the household.<sup>34</sup>

In the public arena between the service rooms and the lord's private chamber both fixed and semi-fixed features acted as indicators of social gradations, while the non-fixed-feature elements, the ritual of dining, also acknowledged the superior status of the lord, giving instructions for the ordering of all others in the hall according to a fixed hierarchy. Courtesy texts show that from entering the hall, an individual was subject to rules dictating issues such as seating, and the quality and quantity of food. The *Boke of Nurture* recommends that the marshal of the hall should before any feast 'demeene what estates shall sitte in the hall' so as to be sure to seat them correctly according to social status, also giving instructions regarding with how many people an individual of given rank should share a mess of food.<sup>35</sup> All guests in the hall were seated and served strictly according to rank. Thus modern spatial theory allows us to analyse the ways in which different aspects of hall layout and ritual coalesced to ensure household hierarchy and status. Yet, a much deeper reading of hall ritual can be uncovered if medieval theories of gesture are taken into account. Central to all of this

---

wider discussion of the ways in which architectural features of the great hall were used as rhetorical strategies in the maintenance and manipulation of power see M. Johnson, *An Archaeology of Capitalism* (Oxford, 1996), pp. 121-45.

<sup>32</sup> C. M. Woolgar, *The Great Household in Late Medieval England* (London, 1999), p. 149; C. A. Wilson, 'From Medieval Great Hall to Country-House Dining Room: The Furniture and Setting of the Social Meal', in C. A. Wilson (ed.), *The Appetite and the Eye* (Edinburgh, 1987), pp. 31-32.

<sup>33</sup> F. J. Furnivall (ed.), *The Babees Book*, EETS, OS 32 (1868; repr. 1969), p. 329.

<sup>34</sup> Even if the head of the household were not present in the hall itself, the existence of squints in the wall above the high table (such as can be seen at Gainsborough Old Hall and Stokesay Castle) would mean that the illusion of observation would be omnipresent in the manner of a medieval Panopticon. This was discussed in F. S. Dunlop, 'Watching You Watching Me: Audiences and Performers in Late Medieval Halls', unpublished paper given at York University, November 2001.

<sup>35</sup> John Russell, *Boke of Nurture*, in Furnivall (ed.), *The Babees Book*, pp. 188-94. In *Sir Gawain* each of the guests at the Camelot feast is seated according to rank: 'The best burne ay abof, as hit best semed': Anderson (ed.), *Sir Gawain*, p. 170, l. 73. Derek Brewer has shown that each of those on the high dais has their seating position dictated by their relationship to King Arthur: D. Brewer, 'Feasts', in D. Brewer and J. Gibson (eds.), *A Companion to the Gawain Poet* (Cambridge, 1997), p. 133. The elevated status of these individuals is further emphasised in the text by their being 'doubble' quantities of food: Anderson (ed.), *Sir Gawain*, p. 169, l. 61.



ritual is the idea of control; the ceremony of the hall relies absolutely on control of an individual's gestures and body language.

When considering medieval dining one must, of course, take account of Norbert Elias's seminal study of conduct, *The Civilizing Process*. Despite his claim to have arbitrarily chosen the medieval period as his 'standard' and 'starting point' for the study of the development of manners, it is clear that he regards the medieval period as largely a primitive and uncivilised period.<sup>36</sup> He concludes of the people of the Middle Ages:

such people stood in a different relationship to one another than we do ... Their affects were conditioned to forms of relationship and conduct which, by today's standards of conditioning, are embarrassing or at least unattractive. What was lacking in this *courtois* world, or at least had not been developed to the same degree, was the invisible wall which now seems to rise between one human body and another, repelling and separating, the hall [*sic*] which is often perceptible today at the mere approach of something that has been in contact with the mouth or hands of someone else, and which manifests itself as embarrassment at the mere sight of many bodily functions of others, and often at their mere mention, or as a feeling of shame when one's own functions are exposed to the gaze of others, and by no means only then.<sup>37</sup>

Thus, although Elias is deeply distressed by the failure of those living in the Middle Ages to master, for example, the use of the fork, his primary concern seems to be with civilised ideas of the body or the embodied self. What Elias seems to have forgotten is that the medieval body, as was seen in Chapter 1, was a body which in its natural state oozed, dripped, and excreted for the sake of its own health.

The medieval humoral body was perceived as a sack of fluids which regulated itself by ridding itself of excesses. Thus, spitting, a habit castigated and abhorred by Elias as entirely uncivilised, was perceived in the Middle Ages as not only a normal way of ridding the body of excess humours, but also essential to health. The same is true of passing flatus. This does not mean to say that the Middle Ages were a behavioural free-for-all in which the 'invisible wall' between self and other was entirely lacking; in many ways the conduct literature of the Middle Ages can be seen as concerned with dealing with humoral bodies placed in closed proximity.<sup>38</sup> Whilst aware of (and therefore unembarrassed by) the fact that the embodied self is highly permeable, the texts remain highly conscious of the comfort of others. Thus although passing flatus is seen as a

---

<sup>36</sup> N. Elias, *The Civilizing Process: The History of Manners and State Formation and Civilization*, trans. E. Jephcott (Oxford, 1994), p. 48.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 55-56.

<sup>38</sup> Gail Kern Paster has examined the ways in which gender differences in humoral composition interact with ideas of courtesy in renaissance drama to produce a variety of rhetorical effects: G. K. Paster, *The Body Embarrassed: Drama and the Discipline of Shame in Early Modern England*, (New York, 1993).



natural act it is advised that one be 'priuy' to avoid offence to others and being regarded as unmannerly.<sup>39</sup> In other words, what Elias has neglected is the role of "scientific truths" in the construction of sensibilities. The modern "scientific" conception of the body is not so centrally concerned with the body as leaky and permeable, hence modern sensibilities are constructed in an environment in which bodily emissions are neither inevitable or health-promoting. In the Middle Ages the reverse was true. By failing to realise that "scientific" conceptions of the body are inextricably linked with sensibilities and thus notions of the civilised, Elias misses the moral dimension of medieval conduct.

This moral dimension is illustrated by a parable in the *Fasciculus morum* concerning three friends at a nobleman's banquet. At the end of the meal each of the men is offered a partially rotten apple as dessert. The first man eats his apple in its entirety and, as a consequence, is later sick; thus he is considered a glutton. The second man refuses to eat his apple at all and consequently is considered unmannered [*ineducatus*]. The third man takes the apple and cuts out the spoiled part and discards it, while eating the part that is good. As a result, this man is considered a gentleman [*curialis*].<sup>40</sup> This parable occurs in the section on Envy and is read allegorically to show that the correct way of dealing with one's neighbours is to reject that which is bad in them whilst accepting that which is good. Read literally, however, it is clear that there are thought to be right and wrong ways of eating food, and these ways of eating can express the inner character and worth of the individual. Such a value system would suggest that it would be possible to assess a man's moral worth by studying the way in which a man comports himself at the table. In fact, the great hall provided a stage on which the values of individuals, as expressed by table manners, could be both performed and surveyed as a result of the existence of a highly developed theory of gesture.

Jean-Claude Schmitt has referred to the culture of the Middle Ages as a 'gestural culture', meaning both that gestures played a crucial role in social relationships in the

---

<sup>39</sup> The modern (civilised) embarrassment experienced regarding bodily processes, as suggested by Elias, can be seen in a twentieth-century conduct text. Following ways of dealing with belching it suggests that, 'Audible wind of other kinds really has to be ignored or laughed off. Either way it is embarrassing. You could try staring accusingly at the dog': E. Martyn, *Everyday Etiquette: A Comprehensive Guide to Common Courtesies, How to be a Perfect Guest, Entertaining, plus, How to Cope with Formal Occasions* (London, 1989), p. 101. This advice is illuminating both for its apparent inability to even name flatus (the vague description 'other kinds' suggest a whole barrage of kind of 'audible wind') and also its lack of concern for the comfort of other guests; the primary concern seems to be the passing off of the activity onto the hapless family pet.

<sup>40</sup> S. Wenzel (ed.), *Fasciculus morum: A Fourteenth-Century Preacher's Handbook* (London, 1989), pp. 190-91.



medieval period, and also that medieval culture thought about its own gestures and constructed a theory of gesture.<sup>41</sup> The most elaborate gestural theory was contained in Hugh of Saint Victor's *De institutio novitiorum*, written in the first half of the twelfth century in the monastic context.<sup>42</sup> The aim of this text was to integrate novices into the monastic environment through a prescribed catalogue of gestures. At work behind Hugh's prescriptions was, as is evident in the parable of the three friends and the apples, the medieval belief that gestures were expressions of the inner movements of the soul and of the moral values of individuals.<sup>43</sup> Just as gestures might demonstrate the aspects of one's soul, so, conversely, through the manipulation of one's gestures one might improve one's spiritual state. Thus, through prescribing specifically religious gestures for novices to perform, which distanced the novice from the gestures of the secular world, Hugh hoped to ensure the cultivation of a higher spiritual state.

The importance of gesture in the expression and moulding of the inner life of the individual was not restricted to the monastic context. Jonathan Nicholls has suggested that secular courtesy texts and *Mirrors for Princes*, which dictated noble, courteous behaviour and gesture, derived from monastic rules and customaries.<sup>44</sup> In the secular context, the external gestures which expressed one's inner nature revealed not only the state of one's soul, but also one's social status.<sup>45</sup> Functioning as educational manuals for young members of the nobility, such texts gave physical form to abstract ideas of social superiority, prescribing practical actions which distinguished one social class from another. For example, Giles of Rome's *De regimine principum*, translated into Middle English by John Trevisa, gives instructions to young nobles in the matter of 'beryng'.<sup>46</sup> It suggests that even the smallest of gestures are of great significance as they reveal the

---

<sup>41</sup> J.-C. Schmitt, 'The Rationale of Gestures in the West: Third to Thirteenth Centuries', in Bremmer and Roodenburg (eds.), *A Cultural History of Gesture*, p. 59. Since Werner Habicht wrote *Die Gebärde in englischen Dichtungen des Mittelalters* (Munich, 1959), there has been a rising interest in the use of gesture in the Middle Ages. In addition to the critical works cited elsewhere in this chapter see B. Windeatt, 'Gesture in Chaucer', *Medievalia et humanistica*, NS 9 (1979): 143-61; R. G. Benson, *Medieval Body Language: A Study of the Use of Gesture in Chaucer's Poetry*, *Anglistica* 21 (1980); K. M. Phillips, 'Bodily Walls, Windows, and Doors: The Politics of Gesture in Late Fifteenth-Century Books for Women', in J. Wogan-Browne et al. (eds.), *Medieval Women: Texts and Contexts in Late Medieval Britain. Essays for Felicity Riddy* (Turnhout, 2000), pp. 185-98; J. A. Burrow, 'Gestures and Looks in *Piers Plowman*', *Yearbook of Langland Studies* 14 (2000): 75-83.

<sup>42</sup> Schmitt, 'The Rationale of Gestures', p. 67.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 60-64.

<sup>44</sup> J. Nicholls, *The Matter of Courtesy: Medieval Courtesy Books and the Gawain Poet* (Woodbridge, 1985), pp. 22-23.

<sup>45</sup> If one considers the number of texts in the Middle Ages which are given the title *Mirror* or *Speculum* it is clear, in general, that medieval society was a society obsessed with observation and monitoring.

<sup>46</sup> John Trevisa, *The Governance of Kings and Princes: John Trevisa's Middle English Translation of the De regimine principum of Aegidius of Rome*, ed. D. C. Fowler et al. (New York, 1997), p. 234.



true nature of the individual, and through them the ‘meuyng disposicion of þe soule may be know’.<sup>47</sup> In this text Giles states that the noble child must learn not to exhibit inappropriate gestures, as such gestures will transmit the wrong message about the noble status of the youth. For example, wandering glances are to be discouraged for ‘þerby þei scholde be holde li3t hedede and lowe and feynt herted for it wolde seme þat he wondrede of alle thinges’.<sup>48</sup>

At the root of both religious and secular conduct literature is the belief that youth is a time of a lack of control.<sup>49</sup> According to Trevisa’s translation of Bartholomaeus Anglicus’ *De proprietatibus rerum*, the transition from infant to youth is marked very much in food terms: ‘þe childe is properliche clepid *puer* when he is iwanied from melk and departid from þe brest and þe tete, and knoweþ good and euel ... þanne he is iput and sette to lore vndir tutours and compelled to fonge lore and chastisinge’.<sup>50</sup> At this point of nutritional separation the youth enters the phase of intensive instruction designed to discipline the body and mind. To such discipline the child is inherently deeply resistant. Trevisa goes on to state that such children ‘hap nou3t gret maistre or þey come to þe 3ere of puberte’, that is, that they are at the mercy of forces other than reason. They ‘holde no counsaile but þey wreyen and tellen oute alle þat þey see and here. Sodeynnly þey lau3e and sodeynly þey wepe. Alwey þey crie and iangle and iape and make mowes; vnneþe þey ben stille while þey slepe. Whanne þey bene iwassche of filthe and hore anon þey defoulen hemself eft’.<sup>51</sup>

This lack of control is, unsurprisingly, strongly manifested at the table. The table manners of the medieval youth left much to be desired. Sometimes the youth was so unsocialised as to fail even to drag himself as far as the table in order to satisfy his appetite. An example from an Oxford school-book charts the fond memories of a schoolboy regarding his old childhood life of ‘slouthe’, when ‘My brekefast was brought to my beddys side as ofte as me liste to call therfor, and so many tymes I was first fedde or I were cledde’. In his new regime of study and instruction the schoolboy laments that ‘Brekfastes that were sumtyme brought at my biddynge is dryven oute of countrey and

---

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 230.

<sup>49</sup> Gesture, control, and youth are examined in detail in F. S. Dunlop, ‘Male Adolescence and Youth in the Early Tudor Interludes *Fulgens and Lucre* and *Nature* by Henry Medwall; *Mundus et Infans*; *Youth*; and *Calisto and Melebea*’ (PhD Diss, York University, forthcoming).

<sup>50</sup> Trevisa, *On the Properties of Things*, 1: 300.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 300-1.



never shall cum agayne'.<sup>52</sup> Such lack of control over the youthful appetite was not always regarded in later life with such affection. For example, Thomas Hoccleve's *La male regle* complains that the narrator's health in later life has been ruined by uncontrolled eating in youth, against the advice of 'Reson'.<sup>53</sup> Likewise, when the narrator of John Lydgate's *Testament* recalls the ill-advised actions of his youth to the woman called 'remembraunce of myspent tyme', neglect of the correct table manners are amongst those actions he regrets: 'With vnwasshe hondes' he went 'to dyner'.<sup>54</sup> Lydgate's failure in table manners is given equal weight to other 'sins' such as lying, being angry with his friends, and preferring to play games rather than going to church, as all equally reveal his moral and spiritual failings.<sup>55</sup>

As was shown through an analysis of the great hall using modern spatial theories, dining behaviour was afforded central importance. It is unsurprising, therefore, to find that medieval courtesy texts (most of which contain large sections on table etiquette, with a number being entirely devoted to the subject) engage directly with many of these conceptions of the youth as the uncontrolled individual in need of tuition and instruction in order to bridle his headstrong nature. In such literature it is possible to perceive a clear link between the control of gesture and behaviour and the ideas of both adulthood and high social status. Generally, they consider the meal as the most important event in social life and concentrate their precepts on or around it. The instruction offered by the tutor-figure falls into two categories: information on how to behave as a diner at table (for example, not to put meat from one's plate into the communal dish, not to spit whilst at the table, or not to throw bones on the floor), or how to serve at table those of a higher status (for example, how to cut the bread).<sup>56</sup>

It is easy to see how a society which placed such a high regard on the controlled gesture as the embodiment of a pure soul and high social status would see getting to

<sup>52</sup> Nelson (ed.), *A Fifteenth Century School Book*, pp. 1-2.

<sup>53</sup> Thomas Hoccleve, 'La male regle', in F. J. Furnivall (ed.), *Hoccleve's Work's: The Minor Poems*, EETS, ES 61, 73 (1970), pp. 28-29.

<sup>54</sup> John Lydgate, 'The Testament of Dan John Lydgate', in H. MacCracken (ed.), *The Minor Poems of John Lydgate: Part 1*, EETS, ES 107 (1911), pp. 339, 353.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 352-53.

<sup>56</sup> The degree to which control and table etiquette had been absorbed into medieval society is evidenced by the poem *Cleanness*, where the traditional image of Christ breaking the bread at the Last Supper has been modified to fit in with medieval table rules which state that bread must never be broken but cut. Hence, Christ is described as breaking the bread more cleanly than all the knives 'of Tolowse moght tyght hit to kerve': Anderson (ed.), *Sir Gawain*, p. 102, ll. 105-8. This incident is discussed in E. B. Keiser, 'The Festive Decorum of *Cleanness*', in L. D. Benson and J. Leyerle (eds.), *Chivalric Literature: Essays on the Relations Between Literature and Life in the Later Middle Ages* (Kalamazoo, 1980), p. 71.



grips with specific techniques, such as the art of carving or the washing of a lord's hands, as a particularly efficient apprenticeship in becoming a man and the head of a household. In *The Canterbury Tales* we can see the distinction of maturity between the Knight and his son the Squire through the descriptions in 'The General Prologue'. While the Knight, who loves 'curteisie', is described as taking the position of honour at the head of the 'bord', above other foreign knights in Prussia, his 'Curteis' son 'carf biforn his fader at the table'.<sup>57</sup> In Chaucer's description of the Knight, the image of the Knight at the head of the table elides silently with that of the brave and victorious Knight at battle. The Knight's ability to comport himself at the table and on the battle-field are both presented as evidence of his manhood and high status. By contrast, the Squire is linked by Chaucer with the Spring, the season associated by Lydgate and others with misspent youth. Thus Chaucer suggests his lack of self-control and immaturity, the implication being that the Squire has yet to reach the end of his training in table etiquette and therefore manhood. This supposition is confirmed by the tale told by the Squire, in which feasting plays a large part.<sup>58</sup> In fact, it plays such a large part that it actually impedes the progress of the narrative. If one looks carefully at 'The Squire's Tale' one notices that the narrative is so weighed down by feasting and gourmandising that it fails to take off. The Squire's youthful lack of control is betrayed in his inability to get a feast to behave in a controlled fashion within his attempt at a creating a romance.<sup>59</sup>

Thus we can see how from an individual's ability to behave himself correctly at the table wider implications concerning matters such as maturity and the ability to rule and govern can be discerned. Texts such as Giles of Rome's *De regimine principum* rely implicitly upon a theory of concatenation of control: the prince who can control his own body and gestures is capable of controlling his household and is capable of controlling his kingdom. The same theory holds true for other members of the nobility. Yet all of this seems very alien to everyday urban life. To what extent can these same concerns be transferred to non-aristocratic urban dwellers? The first point to consider is whether

---

<sup>57</sup> Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Riverside Chaucer*, ed. L. D. Benson, 3<sup>rd</sup> edn. (Oxford, 1987), p. 24-25, ll. 46, 52, 99-100.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 169-77.

<sup>59</sup> In fact, the whole of 'The Squire's Tale' betrays immaturity. It is as though the Squire has an idea of the components of a romance (magical items, feasts, etc.), but is not yet man enough to realise how they should fit into the text, or that there is some sense of moderation or decorum regarding their presence. Hence, we end up with a text which is deformed by disproportionate quantities of romance ingredients and is spiralling out of the control of its narrator, until the merciful interruption by the Franklin.



courtesy texts ~~filtered~~ had an audience within urban society. The mere fact that noble conduct was codified within aristocratic courtesy texts ensured that those who so desired could read, appropriate, and transform this information in a manner suited to their own circumstances. Unsurprisingly, therefore, later medieval England saw a proliferation of conduct texts that was furthered by the advent of printing technology.<sup>60</sup> For example, John Lydgate's courtesy poem '*Stans puer ad mensam*', published by Caxton, seems to have been widely and continuously circulated as it is extant in fifty copies from the early-fourteenth to the mid-sixteenth centuries. Similarly Caxton published the longer courtesy poem, *The Book of Curtesye*, which was printed in three other editions within twenty-five years of Caxton's.<sup>61</sup>

If one looks at the contents of *The Boke of Curtesye* one can see, as with Giles of Rome's *De regimine principum*, there is a concern with the control of gesture and the moral implications which will be drawn from the observation of the uncontrolled gesture:

A waueryng eye glydyng sodeynly  
Fro place to place & a foot variante  
That in no place abydeþ stably  
These ben þe signes the wiseman seith sikerly  
Of suche a wight as is vnmanerly nyce  
And is ful likely disposid vnto vyce.<sup>62</sup>

<sup>60</sup> M. A. Amos, "'For Manners Maketh Man'": Bordieu, De Certeau, and the Common Appropriation of Noble Manners in the *Book of Courtesy*, in K. Ashley and R. L. A. Clark (eds.), *Medieval Conduct*, (London, 2001), pp. 24-25. The downward diffusion of aristocratic courtesy texts in medieval Flemish society has been examined in T. Meder, '*Boek van zeden*: Three Medieval Flemish Courtesy Poems in the Latin *Facetus* Tradition', in D. Maddox and S. Sturm-Maddox (eds.), *Literary aspects of Courtly Culture: Selected Papers from the Seventh Triennial Congress of the International Courtly Literature Society University of Massachusetts, Amherst, USA, 27 July-1 August 1992* (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 333-41.

<sup>61</sup> Amos, "'For Manners Maketh Man'", pp. 34-35. On Caxton's role in urban society see A. F. Sutton, 'Caxton Was a Mercer: His Social Milieu and Friends', in N. Rogers (ed.), *England in the Fifteenth Century: Proceedings of the 1992 Harlaxton Symposium*, Harlaxton Medieval Studies 4 (Stamford, 1994), pp. 118-48.

<sup>62</sup> F. J. Furnivall (ed.), *Caxton's Book of Curtesye Printed at Westminster about 1477-8 AD*, EETS, ES 3 (1868; repr. 1973), p. 13, ll. 99-103. Felicity Riddy has considered the role of the courtesy text *What the Goodwife Taught her Daughter* within the medieval bourgeois household: F. Riddy, 'Mother Knows Best: Reading Social Change in a Courtesy Text', *Speculum* 71 (1996): 66-86. *The Goodwife* shows a similar concern with the control of gesture. For example, when in the street it advises the daughter: 'When þou goest be þe weie, goe þou noght to faste./ Wagge noght with þin hedde, þin shuldres away to caste': T. F. Mustanoja (ed.), *The Goodwife Taught Her Daughter, The Good Wife Wold a Pylgremage, The Thewis of Gud Women* (Helsinki, 1948), p. 161, ll. 44-45. These lines have been misread, in my opinion, by Barbara Hanawalt to suggest a specifically feminine fear of public spaces: B. A. Hanawalt, 'At the Margins of Women's Space in Medieval Europe', in R. E. Edwards and V. Ziegler (eds.), *Matrons and Marginal Women in Medieval Society* (Woodbridge, 1995), p. 5. In fact, this is the precisely the same kind of advice as is given to the young man in *The Book of Curtesye*. Claire Sponsler also sees a sharp disjunction between the emphasis on restrained gesture between young men and women. She compares the advice given in *The Good Wife* with that given in *How the Wise Man Taught His Son*, which appear in the same manuscript. Although, clearly the text directed towards young men has less advice on gesture than the text



Table manners are of primary importance, as instructions concerning them occupy the majority of the text. These are likewise concerned with the idea of control. For example, the Lytly John to whom the text is addressed is advised not to eat too greedily:

Eschewe also tacches of foule Raueyne  
Of gredy luste with vncurteys appetyte  
Prece not to sone fro your viand restreyne  
Your honde a while with manerly respite  
Fede you for necessite & not for delite  
Demene you with mete & drynke so soberly  
That ye not ben enfecte with glotony.<sup>63</sup>

At work here quite clearly is the reciprocity of gesture and inner self which Hugh of Saint Victor envisaged in his *De institutio novitiorum*, where the restrained physical gesture moulded the inner soul. As Lytly John restrains his hand from grasping too eagerly for his food, so his soul is removed from the threat of gluttony and learns <sup>to</sup> reject gluttonous desires. The youth is made aware that his behaviour at table is the subject of constant scrutiny and interpretation by others who will make assumptions as to his moral worth based on his physical actions. For example, he is advised:

Whan at your mete ye sitte at the table  
In euery prees and in euery company  
Dispose you to be compenable  
That men may of you reporte for commendable  
For trusteth wel vpon your berynge  
Men wil you blame or gyue preysynge.<sup>64</sup>

Likewise, he is advised to keep his mouth closed whilst eating so that men do not think ill of him 'Bicause ye ete your mete vnmanerly'.<sup>65</sup>

*The Book of Curtesye* is, however, more than a straightforward transposition of behavioural patterns from the aristocratic to the urban bourgeois context; the text has been subtly adapted to its new context. The text contains information on how to behave when walking down the street and whilst in the church as well as when within the dining

---

directed towards young women, I feel Sponsler is somewhat disingenuous in her argument by failing to note that *The Book of Curtesye* gives advice to its male readers similar to that given to young women in *The Good Wife*, despite using *The Book of Curtesye* later as evidence of the commodification of manners: C. Sponsler, 'Conduct Books and Good Governance', in *Drama and Resistance: Bodies, Goods, and Theatricality in Late Medieval England* (London, 1997), pp. 50-74. Significantly, *The Goodwife* gives very little advice as to how the daughter should behave at mealtimes. I shall specifically discuss gender issues and dining later in this chapter.

<sup>63</sup> Furnivall (ed.), *Cuxton's Book of Curtesye*, p. 19, ll. 176-82.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 17, ll. 149-54.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 25, l. 245.



hall.<sup>66</sup> Moreover, the text accepts that Lytyl John may have other aims in mind when he comporting himself in the hall; the young man here under instruction is not so much concerned with showing his own fitness to govern his country as ensuring his own social advancement. For example, when the text suggests that Lytyl John be at all times attentive when he serves at table, it concludes, ‘And in especyal vse ye attendaunce/ Wherein ye shal your self best auaunce’.<sup>67</sup> Furthermore Lytyl John is warned that there are true good manners and the counterfeit good manners of the ‘Ruskyn galante’, the ‘Counterfeter of vnconnyng curtoisye’; he must take care to follow the long-established code of conduct, by means of which he shall ‘best worship conquere & wyne’, rather than that of the over-fashionable upstart, which can only serve to make him ‘semen almoste enfemynate’.<sup>68</sup>

Hence, it is clear that aristocratic courtesy texts had a role and function within the bourgeois urban home. They had been adapted to suit their new audience, but to a large extent their aims can be seen as similar. Where the aristocratic texts were designed to instruct the lord in how to behave in order to reveal his status as the mature man, who demonstrates through his ability to control his own gestures his fitness to govern either his country or his estate, so these texts in their bourgeois environment allowed the householder to show himself as the manly man fit to control his own household, and perhaps take on a wider governmental role within urban society.<sup>69</sup> The articles of napery and the basins and ewers found in the inventories of urban houses would have allowed a degree of ritual to accompany dining, through which the head of the household could demonstrate his control of gesture and hence his fitness to control his *familia*.

This model of control is useful to bear in mind when thinking of urban inns, the places in which the vast majority of visitors, of varying status, stayed when visiting the city on business or pleasure.<sup>70</sup> In the previous chapter I touched briefly on the idea of the inn functioning as a household, with the innkeeper acting as the head of that particularly transient household. That innkeepers were perceived as having such a role is clear from

---

<sup>66</sup> Indeed the advice given to the young man regarding keeping secrets to himself when he finds himself in a crowded place might well be applicable to the situation of the apprentice in the tavern discussed in the previous chapter: *ibid.*, pp. 15-17, ll. 134-147.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13, ll. 118-19.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 45, ll. 451-52; p. 49, ll. 479, 490.

<sup>69</sup> Lydgate's *Dietary*, with its implied links between the health of the individual, the health of the household, and the health of wider society (as discussed in Chapter 1), shows many of the same concerns as this urban conduct literature.

<sup>70</sup> C. Barron, ‘Centres of Conspicuous Consumption: The Aristocratic Town House in London, 1200-1550’, *London Journal* 20 (1995): 12; M. Carlin, *Medieval Southwark* (London, 1996), pp. 195-96.



civic legislation. For example in 1384, Nicholas Bembre complained of the common perpetration of ‘larcenies and evil deeds’ which he attributed to the large number of ‘thieves and evildoers’ harboured by London innkeepers. In order to combat this lawlessness he ruled that all ‘innkeepers within the liberty should be sworn to harbour no one longer than a day and a night, unless they were willing to answer for them and their acts’.<sup>71</sup> In other words, the innkeeper was to be legally responsible for the behaviour of his guests in just the same way as a householder was held responsible for the actions of his *familia*, his family, apprentices, and servants.

If one looks, for example, at the most famous inn in medieval literature, Chaucer’s Tabard Inn in Southwark, the link between the role of the Host, Harry Bailly, in his inn and the role of the officials looking after discipline in the aristocratic hall is drawn by Chaucer in his description: ‘A semely man oure Hooste was withalle/ For to been a marchal in an hall’.<sup>72</sup> His qualities as a head of household are enumerated:

A large man he was with eyen stepe -  
A fairer burgeys was ther noon in Chepe -  
Boold of his speche, and wys, and wel ytaught,  
And of manhode hym lakkede right naught.<sup>73</sup>

In other words, Harry Bailly is precisely the successful, manly man courtesy texts envisage as the head of the household. His household is, however, a very mixed bag. His guests come from a wide range of social backgrounds and are both male and female. Just as in any other household, the innkeeper would have been expected to have maintained social hierarchy serving each guest according to status. This may have been achieved by segregating the guests. An inventory, although from a much later date (1538), survives for the real Tabard Inn in Southwark, which refers to the ‘rose parlar’, the ‘clyff parlar’, a ‘greate chambre’, a ‘little seller’, a ‘new seller’, another ‘chamber’, a ‘taward chamber’, a ‘halle’, the ‘Crowne Chamber’, a ‘drynkynge bower’, a ‘Keye chamber’, a ‘Corne Chamber’, and ‘severall chambers’ containing ‘bedstedes’.<sup>74</sup>

<sup>71</sup> *CPMR, 1381-1412*, pp. 78-79. The rules controlling the behaviour of innkeepers were expanded in 1446: *CLBK*, pp. 316-18.

<sup>72</sup> Chaucer, *Riverside Chaucer*, p. 35, ll. 751-52. The fact that Chaucer locates his inn in the suburb of Southwark rather than the city of London itself means that the legislation surrounding its inhabitants would have been more relaxed. It is perhaps for this reason that we witness the pilgrims behaviour in the Tabard at ‘nyght’; if the Tabard were in London the pilgrims would have been breaking the curfew legislation: Chaucer, *Riverside Chaucer*, p. 35, l. 721. On the legislation of inns in Southwark see Carlin, *Medieval Southwark*, pp. 194-95.

<sup>73</sup> Chaucer, *Riverside Chaucer*, p. 35, ll. 753-56.

<sup>74</sup> This inventory is printed, along with other documents, in P. Norman, ‘The Tabard Inn, Southwark. The Queen’s Head, William Rutter, and St. Margaret’s Church’, *Surrey Archaeological Collections* 13 (1897): 31-32. Other information on the real Tabard Inn and Harry Bailly can be found in G. R. Corner, ‘On Some



Although clearly some of these rooms would have been used for storage, administrative purposes, and sleeping accommodation, it is probable that the remaining chambers were used for housing guests of different social status, with the ‘drynkynge bower’ no doubt accommodating the local, lower-status drinkers. That Chaucer’s Host maintains social distinctions between his guests is evident from the special attention he pays to his higher status guests, for example, in allowing the Knight to tell his story first.

That Chaucer’s Host is successful in his role as householder is made clear by Chaucer’s favourable description of him. He possesses the mental agility necessary to deal with the majority of his customers with ease, and those who might incline to become unruly, such as perhaps the Miller, would have been intimidated by Harry Bailly’s ‘large’ physical form. He also has a clear head for business as he makes sure his guest have paid their ‘rekenynges’ before they head off on pilgrimage.<sup>75</sup> The pilgrims acceptance of the Host as the head of their ‘household’ is recognised in their agreement to allow him to act as their ‘governour’ and ‘juge and reportour’ of their tales.<sup>76</sup> This extension of the role of householder outside the confines of the inn is no doubt assisted by the fact that the prize offered for the best tale told takes the form of food, ‘a soper at oure aller coste’, for which he is responsible when in his household proper.<sup>77</sup>

However, the Tabard might be seen as exceptional in its possession of such a strong head of household;<sup>78</sup> not all inns were so well governed and, consequently, they were often considered dens of vice and misconduct. In part, this bad reputation was undoubtedly as a result of the very difficult legal status of the inn-keeper as householder over a disparate, ambiguous, and fluid household; in part it may also have been as a result of the prominent role played by women in the running of inns, taverns and ale houses as (occasionally) proprietors, wives of proprietors, tapsters, and servants. This prevalence of women within drinking spaces often led to accusations of prostitution.<sup>79</sup> Indeed, in a fifteenth-century Latin vocabulary, examples of insulting names for women include ‘*tabernaria*’ [tavern-haunter], which it glosses as ‘strumpytt’, ‘*caupana*’ and

---

Ancient Inns of Southwark’, *Surrey Archaeological Collections* 2 (1864): 50-81; W. H. Hart, ‘Further Remarks on Some of the Ancient Inns of Southwark’, *Surrey Archaeological Collections* 3 (1865): 193-207.

<sup>75</sup> Chaucer, *Riverside Chaucer*, p. 35, l. 760.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 36, ll. 813-14.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 36, l. 799.

<sup>78</sup> Although it must be noted that Harry’s own wife did not have such a favourable view of her husband: *ibid.*, p. 240, ll. 1889-1924.

<sup>79</sup> B. A. Hanawalt, ‘The Host, The Law, and the Ambiguous Space of Medieval London Taverns’, in B. A. Hanawalt and D. Wallace (eds.), *Medieval Crime and Social Control* (London, 1999), pp. 206-211.



'taberna', both of which it glosses as 'a taverner wyffe'.<sup>80</sup> Apparently by such means even school children were made aware of the immoral role played by women in drinking houses. If we look at the inn, the 'Cheker-of-the-Hope', in which the Canterbury pilgrims find themselves at the end of their pilgrimage in the pseudo-Chaucerian *Tale of Beryn*, we find precisely such an immoral depiction of an inn.<sup>81</sup> At the Cheker the tapster, Kit, under the promise of sex manages to con the Pardoner of his supper, which she enjoys in the company of her 'paramour'.<sup>82</sup> Unlike the Tabard, there is no centralising authority figure such as Harry Bailly; the Cheker's host hovers on the margins of the text, allowing Kit to operate with impunity.

### Women and Food

From this perceived role of women in drinking houses it is clear that the position of women within the household was to some degree problematic. They do not seem to possess the necessary "manly" authority required to control a household. In courtesy texts women tend to be entirely written out of the dining experience: the noble household is constituted entirely by men; men are both the providers and recipients of table service.<sup>83</sup> Yet, as was seen in the *Castle of Labour*, women had a central role in food provision within the urban household.<sup>84</sup> This responsibility for ensuring the smooth-running of the dining experience is enshrined in Nicholas Love's description of the miracle of the water being turned into wine at the marriage at Cana in his *Life of Christ*. In this description the Virgin Mary plays the conscientious housewife: she arrives at Cana several days before the other guests 'so that whan othere gestes were beden/ sche was there all redy and homely bifore'; she did not sit at the feast like other guests, but she went 'about mynystryng as one of hem that delyuereden mete and drynke and othere necessities'; and when she 'sawh the defaute of wyne' she bade 'the seruantes forto goo to hir sone/ and that thei schulde doo what he bad hem doo'.<sup>85</sup> In

<sup>80</sup> Wright, *Anglo-Saxon Vocabularies*, p. 696. The equivalent list for men contains no occupation-related insults, only those concerned with personal morality, such as 'herytick', 'gluton', 'spowsbreker', 'lechowr', etc.: *ibid.*, pp. 693-94.

<sup>81</sup> F. J. Furnivall and W. G. Stone (eds.), *The Tale of Beryn*, EETS, ES 105 (1905; repr. 1975), p. 1, l. 14.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 13-15, ll. 427-33.

<sup>83</sup> The obvious exception to this rule is Bishop Grosseteste's *Household Statutes*, which are addressed to a female head of household, the Countess of Lincoln.

<sup>84</sup> This role was not restricted to the household: women working in hospitals were clearly connected with the feeding of the inmates. For example, if one examines the illustrations accompanying Carole Rawcliffe's article on medieval nurses one finds that the caring role of the women in the illustrations is almost entirely centred on feeding the infirm: C. Rawcliffe, 'Hospital Nurses and Their Work', in R. Britnell (ed.), *Daily Life in the Late Middle Ages* (Stroud, 1998), pp. 43-64.

<sup>85</sup> Nicholas Love, *Nicholas Love: The Mirrour of the Blessed Lyf of Jesu Crist*, ed. J. Hogg and L. F. Powell (Salzburg, 1989), 1: p. 105.



the incident concerning the wine Mary and Christ can be seen as performing their gender specific roles: Mary deals with food presentation, while Christ is concerned with its provision. Love concludes his discussion of the role of Mary with the statement: ‘and soo it semeth that sche was ouer hem/ and that the bridale was gouerned by her and therefore sche was besy that no defau3te were thereat’.<sup>86</sup> This clearly confirms the central role played by women in food provision.

Caroline Walker Bynum has made an in-depth study of the complex relationship women had with food in the Middle Ages, in particular emphasising its special religious significance to them.<sup>87</sup> These connections made between women and food are, on the whole, what I would describe as esoteric and fantastical in nature; they focus primarily on the extreme fasting behaviour of exceptional individuals and the food miracles associated with saintly women. On reading Bynum’s work, one could be excused for assuming that medieval women did not in fact consume food except in the form of the Eucharist. Bynum appears to ground her thinking on these marvellous events in everyday reality: in the fact that women were associated in the Middle Ages with food preparation rather than consumption, and that their control of food was significant because it represented the only resource over which they had control.<sup>88</sup> She does not, however, go on to give supporting evidence for these apparently mundane truths. Yet it is precisely this everyday connection between women and food which I wish to consider.

That medieval women were particularly involved in the feeding of others, specifically the poor and needy has been shown by the thorough and methodical research of Patricia Cullum.<sup>89</sup> In the light of this research perhaps we should re-read Bynum’s discussion of Lidwina of Scheidam, which focuses upon her extreme fasting behaviour, her shedding of parts of her flesh which possessed curative properties, and her feeding of her confessor and friend by lactation, but which also contains a brief comment on her feeding of others by charity and ‘food multiplication miracles’.<sup>90</sup> It is in

---

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>87</sup> C. W. Bynum, *Holy Feast and Holy Fast: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women* (London, 1987).

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 191-94; see also C. W. Bynum, ‘Fast, Feast, and Flesh: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women’, *Representations* 11 (1985): 10.

<sup>89</sup> She has shown in a study of medieval Yorkshire that women were particularly linked with the giving of alms: P. H. Cullum, ‘“And Hir Name was Charite”: Charitable Giving By and For Women in Late Medieval Yorkshire’, in P. J. P. Goldberg (ed.), *Woman is a Worthy Wight: Women in English Society c. 1200-1500* (Stroud, 1992), 182-211.

<sup>90</sup> Bynum, ‘Food, Feast, and Flesh’, pp. 4-9.



these acts of charity that we should see the roots of the miraculous stories surrounding Lidwina. In a society in which poor and underfed members were a constant social problem, the willingness to feed these individuals might take on miraculous status and anyone providing this charitable relief might be regarded by the recipients as a kind of saint. In literary texts women are depicted as giving food to the needy even in the face of masculine objection. For example, in the *Alphabet of Tales* there is the story of a wife who gives food to a 'Lepre man' after having been expressly forbidden to do so by her husband.<sup>91</sup> The virtuous nature of her actions means that her deeds are miraculously disguised upon the sudden return of her husband and result in her being the subject of his praise rather than his blame.

Women did not, of course, merely provide food for others, they actually consumed it themselves. Moreover, literary texts sometimes reveal specifically female communities based on the sociable consumption of food and drink. Such communities are usually regarded with suspicion by men, as can be seen in Skelton's description of an all-female drinking establishment in 'The Tunning of Elinour Rumming'.<sup>92</sup> Likewise, in a medieval carol, which begins, 'Hoow, gossip myne, gossip myn/ Whan will we go to the wyne?', a decadent female community is displayed which is based on women eating and drinking together.<sup>93</sup> In this carol the community of gossips, 'Elynore, Johan, and Margery,/ Margaret, Alis, and Cecely' (ll. 33-34), meet together in one of their houses to drink wine and eat food:

And eche of them will sumwhat bryng  
Gose or pigge or capons wyng  
Pastes of pigynnes or sum other thyng  
For we muste ete  
Sum maner mett (ll. 38-42).

These women live in constant fear of the domestic violence which will ensue if their husbands find out about their carousing, but the joy they have in each other's company and the escape from domestic duty makes the risk worth the punishment.

The existence of actual rowdy female communities such as these is almost impossible to trace. Although a York ecclesiastical cause paper of 1341, which records women gathered together tasting ale, might suggest such a community, as official ale-

<sup>91</sup> M. M. Banks (ed.), *An Alphabet of Tales*, EETS, OS 126, 127 (1904-5), p. 117.

<sup>92</sup> John Skelton, *The Complete Works of John Skelton Laureate*, ed. P. Henderson (London, 1959), pp. 112-29.

<sup>93</sup> This carol appears in R. L. Green (ed.), *The Early English Carols* (Oxford, 1977), pp. 249-51. This version is transcribed from a sixteenth-century manuscript, but several manuscript versions of the text survive from the fifteenth century.



tasting was almost exclusively the province of male ale-tasters.<sup>94</sup> However, evidence from the sixteenth century suggests that women may have appropriated one particular celebratory meal as specifically their own: the occasion of churching. Medieval churching has traditionally been viewed by scholars as a patriarchal or misogynist instrument for the subjugation of women.<sup>95</sup> More recent investigations, however, have seen the ceremony of churching as an occasion for specifically female activities.<sup>96</sup> Undoubtedly, the churching ceremony itself, which took place inside the church, had women acting in key roles, but the feasting which followed it had an equally feminine emphasis. In the sixteenth century, the diarist Henry Machyn records the churching of the wife of Master John Whyt, alderman and grocer of London, after which there was a 'grett dener' attended specifically by 'mony worshephull lades and althermen wyffes and gentyll women'.<sup>97</sup> Likewise, the churching of the wife of Master Bacun was followed by a gathering at her father's house, where 'a grett compene of gentyll women had a gret dener as cold be had as for lentt, as for fysse'.<sup>98</sup> Moreover, it could be seen that the feasting was possibly more important than the church service itself. The churching of the wife of Master John Wytt, described by Machyn, was performed by a minister at the woman's own home because the time offered by the minister at her church was inconvenient. Likewise, at the end of the sixteenth century, when Jane Minors of Barking, Essex, was churched, she was so concerned with feasting at the tavern that she failed to complete the ceremony in the church itself. When asked why she had missed the formal ceremony, she replied that it was just 'a ceremonye'.<sup>99</sup>

By this I do not mean to suggest that men were excluded from churching celebrations, but that, despite the presence of men, this was seen as a specifically

<sup>94</sup> BIHR, CP. E. 40; J. M. Bennett, *Ale, Beer, and Brewsters in England: Women's Work in a Changing World, 1300-1600* (Oxford, 1996), pp. 35, 101-2.

<sup>95</sup> For a summary of scholarly views on churching see D. Cressy, 'Purification, Thanksgiving and the Churching of Women in Post-Reformation England', *Past and Present* 141 (1993): 106-10.

<sup>96</sup> A. Wilson 'The ceremony of Childbirth and Its Interpretation', in V. Fildes (ed.), *Women as Mothers in Pre-Industrial England: Essays in Memory of Dorothy McLaren* (London, 1990), 68-107, sees the whole of childbirth and its accompanying rituals as an exclusive, privileged female space; Cressy, 'Purification, thanksgiving and the Churching of Women', pp. 106-46, re-investigates churching in the light of the perceptions of contemporary women; G. M. Gibson, 'Blessing from Sun and Moon: Churching as Women's Theatre', in B. A. Hanawalt and D. Wallace (eds.), *Bodies and Disciplines: Intersections of Literature and History in Fifteenth-Century England* (London, 1996), pp. 139-54, sees the ceremony of churching as a specifically female ceremony in which women played a privileged role.

<sup>97</sup> J. G. Nichols (ed.), *The Diary of Henry Machyn, Citizen and Merchant-Taylor of London, from AD 1550-1563*, Camden Society 42 (1848), p. 249.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 301.

<sup>99</sup> W. Hale (ed.), *A Series of Precedents and Proceedings in Criminal Causes, Extending from the Year 1475 to 1640: Extracted from the Act-Books of the Ecclesiastical Courts of the Diocese of London* (1847; repr. Edinburgh, 1973), p. 216.



women's occasion.<sup>100</sup> That this was perceived to be the case by those in positions of authority is shown by attempts made by civic officials to suppress the events. In Chester in 1540 the mayor issued a series of ordinances designed to control the behaviour of women: he sought to prevent taverns and ale houses being kept by young women; he attempted to limit the waste caused by the costly dishes, meats, and drinks brought to women following childbirth and also to control the number of women allowed to attend their churchings; and he sought to restrict the headgear worn by women and also to distinguish by dress single women from married women and widows (presumably to allow the easier detection of prostitutes and potential prostitutes).<sup>101</sup> Women's association with food and drink, both as producers and servers in taverns, and as providers and consumers at the celebrations surrounding childbirth, appear to have brought out male anxieties about female disorder and promiscuity. As can be seen from the carol describing the community of gossips, for a medieval man to feel secure in his home and to be assured of proper domestic service by his wife he needed to further delimit his wife's use of that thing over which she has control: food. Moreover, the implication is that given the first opportunity the wife would evade that control.

### Urban Conviviality

I suggested earlier in this chapter that, from the evidence provided by the built environment, the household contents recorded by inventories, and the proliferation of conduct material, a model of urban dining can be constructed which is adapted from the dining patterns of rural, aristocratic households. From the previous chapter on the concept of gluttony and my consideration of the aims of Lydgate's 'Dietary' in Chapter 1, it is evident that the urban table was considered a locus for the demonstration and implementation of household discipline and the site of the inculcation of shared household values. To assume a direct equivalence of dining behaviour from rural to urban environment is, however, naive. Social relationships within the medieval city were clearly different in a variety of ways. A cursory glance through the cases found in the *London Assize of Nuisance* reveals the specific problems raised by urban living conditions: there are constant complaints about encroachments on property, the use of properties as thoroughfares, and the inconvenient location of neighbours' windows and

---

<sup>100</sup> A York cause paper records both men and women attending a churching: Goldberg (ed.), *Women in England*, pp. 65, 72, 73.

<sup>101</sup> Cited in Bennett, *Ale, Beer, and Brewsters*, pp. 142-43.



doorways.<sup>102</sup> These complaints are concerned with the issue of privacy, brought on specifically by the proximity of living necessitated by the medieval city. Sociable dining would undoubtedly have had to negotiate these issues of privacy. One would expect, therefore, that urban living conditions would provoke a greater care and selectivity in terms of who was invited to dine within the urban home, and the urban dining space might reveal a tendency towards greater intimacy than its rural counterpart. Conversely, the proximities afforded by urban living would increase the ease with which friends and neighbours could drop into each others houses, as can be seen in Chaucer's 'Shipman's Tale', where daun John is a constant visitor at the house of the merchant and in which his welcome is demonstrated by swiftly organised meals.<sup>103</sup> As such, therefore, dining in the medieval town might be thought of as demonstrating peculiarly urban characteristics, betraying both a concern for privacy and intimacy alongside a sense of specifically urban neighbourliness.

In fact, details of everyday kinds of communal eating and how it was perceived by urban householders are particularly difficult to discover. Occasionally, York cause papers allow us incidental, tantalising glimpses of dining behaviour. For example, a marital dispute of 1432 records a group of four young people dining together on fish in a house in Bootham, following the contracting of marriage between two of them.<sup>104</sup> In another marital dispute of 1372 servants are seen socialising together as they drink with each other in their employers' houses.<sup>105</sup> In yet another marital case in 1394 men are seen drinking together in a house at night, and men and women are seen eating and drinking together on the occasion on which the marriage is said to have been contracted.<sup>106</sup> In another case a female servant is seen providing food and drink for a visitor, and also lighting candles.<sup>107</sup> Sometimes communal dining can be observed as it oils the cogs of social interaction. For example, in 1422 John Astolott is shown taking a goose with him to a dinner with the father of Agnes Louth, in the hope that her father might be persuaded to consent to his marriage of Agnes.<sup>108</sup> In a case concerning debt in 1430 a group, including the merchant Robert Lascels, to whom the debt is owed, and

---

<sup>102</sup> H. M. Chew and W. Kellaway (eds.), *London Assize of Nuisance 1301-1431: A Calendar*, London Record Society 10 (1973), *passim*.

<sup>103</sup> Chaucer, *Riverside Chaucer*, pp. 203-5.

<sup>104</sup> BIHR, CP. F. 104. This case is partially transcribed in Goldberg (ed.), *Women in England*, pp. 114-16. I am grateful to Jeremy Goldberg for his help on the use of these documents.

<sup>105</sup> BIHR, CP. E. 121.

<sup>106</sup> BIHR, CP. E. 159. This case is partially transcribed in Goldberg (ed.), *Women in England*, pp. 103-9.

<sup>107</sup> BIHR, CP. F. 36.

<sup>108</sup> BIHR, CP. F. 46.



Margaret Harman, chandler and the debtor in the case, are seen eating, drinking, and relaxing together in the summer hall of Robert's house in Petergate.<sup>109</sup> Likewise, in London a chancery petition from 1475-80 or 1483-85 reveals a destitute servant being brought into the cosy atmosphere where a husband and wife, their 'meyny', and three of their neighbours sitting together eating 'soper' in the husband's 'shop'.<sup>110</sup>

Such incidental glimpses of dining behaviour show a less formal view of dining than is suggested by conduct texts. The hall is usually still the site for the entertaining of visitors, and seems to function as a semi-public, semi-private place in which an "outsider" can be brought into the household and incorporated temporarily by the sharing of food and drink and the customs of dining. Moreover, the moveable nature of the furniture found in halls, and in particular the use of wooden screens, would allow quite marked changes in the nature of the hall, depending upon the kind of dining taking place. By the rearrangement of furniture and lighting a hall could be quickly and easily transformed from a formal eating area to a more intimate space.

I wish to pursue briefly one particular intimate aspect of shared consumption. From the examination of depositions given in marital cases it is evident that weddings were marked by the sharing together of food and drink. For example, a deposition from Robert Johnson (1472) states that the contract of marriage between William Forster and Ellen Gray, which took place in a tavern called the Greyhound in Eastcheap, was marked by the contracting parties and other men by drinking red and white wine.<sup>111</sup> In other words, the sharing of food and drink by members of the community represents friends and neighbours coming together to mark a particular life-cycle stage in an individual's existence. I would like to suggest, however, that the sharing of food and drink actually symbolises a private and intimate aspect of married life as much as the public recognition of the event. When a medieval marriage broke down irreparably a

---

<sup>109</sup> BIHR, CP. F. 174. This case is partially transcribed in Goldberg (ed.), *Women in England*, pp. 239-43. Summer halls are mentioned several times in inventories; see, for example, Stell and Hampson (eds.), *Probate Inventories*, pp. 61, 92, 171. Their precise function is uncertain, but they may perhaps have got their name from having particularly large windows, making them particularly suitable for dining and entertaining during the summer months. They may have been similar to garden parlours and garden galleries, which Schofield suggests probably functioned like modern conservatories: J. Schofield, 'Urban Housing in England, 1400-1600', in D. Gaimster and P. Stamper (eds.), *The Age of Transition: The Archaeology of English Culture 1400-1600* (Oxford, 1997), pp. 136-37.

<sup>110</sup> London, Public Record Office, C 1/64/1158. I am grateful to Cordelia Beattie for this reference, which is taken from her transcription of the document. This incident is discussed in B. A. Hanawalt, *Growing Up in Medieval London: The Experience of Childhood in History* (Oxford, 1993), pp. 183-84.

<sup>111</sup> S. McSheffrey (ed. and trans.), *Love and Marriage in Late Medieval London*, TEAMS Middle English Texts (Kalamazoo, 1995), p. 46.



legal separation might be obtained known as *‘divortium a mensa et thoro’* (‘a separation from board and bed’). Although the marriage still existed and neither party could remarry, the spouses were free from the obligation to sleep together and eat together.<sup>112</sup> While we are quite happy to see sex as an act of intimacy, dining is perceived as a public, impersonal event. I would argue, however, that in the medieval period eating together had a perceived intimate side to it, just as sexual intercourse had. Thus, the term *‘mensa’* in the divorce wording was more than just formulaic, it actually referred to a contractual bond of marriage.

This view is supported by evidence provided by depositions in marital cases. Although, as shown above, drinking together following the contracting of marriage could be an opportunity for the communal celebration of a marriage, it was also an act specifically undertaken by the couple themselves. For example, the marital case between John Bedeman and Agnes Nicholas (1470) notes that following the exchange of vows the couple unclasped their hands, kissed one another, and drank good beer.<sup>113</sup> Likewise, the marital case between Agnes Whitingdon and John Ely (1487) records that following the contracting of their marriage they drank together merrily.<sup>114</sup> In York, the marital case between Katherine, the servant of John Dene, and a certain Roger (1449), states that following their marriage vows Roger and Katherine drank wine together from the same ‘crater’.<sup>115</sup> More importantly, in these cases it is implied that eating and drinking together somehow represents the intimacy of marriage. For example, the case between Elizabeth Isaak and John Bolde (1472) states that following the exchange of vows John and Elizabeth were seen many times to eat, drink, and talk together as man and wife.<sup>116</sup> Likewise, one of the deponents in a York marital case in 1345 claims that relationships between the two parties were intimate and typical of marriage because they were seen eating, drinking, and kissing together peaceably, freely, and without force.<sup>117</sup> Similarly, during the preliminaries of courtship a London man Robert asked his friend William to enquire whether a certain Lucy was committed to another man. Lucy is said to have

---

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6.

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 41.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 58.

<sup>115</sup> BIHR, CP. F. 237.

<sup>116</sup> McSheffrey (ed.), *Love and Marriage*, p. 54.

<sup>117</sup> F. Pedersen, *‘Romeo and Juliet of Stonegate’: A Medieval Marriage in Crisis*, Borthwick Papers 87 (York, 1995), p. 14.



replied that she was free from commitments and agreeable to speak and drink with the said Robert.<sup>118</sup>

This behaviour is also recorded in literary texts, where the absence of a shared meal is a sure sign of a marriage not taking place properly. If the weddings between the knight and the hag in Chaucer's 'The Wife of Bath's Tale' and *The Wedding of Sir Gawain and Dame Ragnell* are compared this point becomes clear. The wedding between Sir Gawain and Dame Ragnell takes place with the free consent of Sir Gawain; consequently it is marked by the proper ceremony appropriate to a wedding. The reader is therefore treated to a full description of the wedding banquet, at which Dame Ragnell eats in the manner of a savage beast; there then follows the bedroom scene in which Gawain, as a man of honour, moves to consummate the marriage: "'I wolde do more/ Then for to kisse, and God before'".<sup>119</sup> This prompts the transformation of Dame Ragnell into the beautiful maiden. In Chaucer's version of the story, the unnamed knight is married to the hag under duress, and this is signalled in the text by the absence of the wedding banquet: 'I seye ther nas no joye ne feeste at al'.<sup>120</sup> Just as there is no wedding feast there is no consummation of the marriage. Unlike Sir Gawain, when this knight is brought to bed with the hag he merely 'walweth and he turneth to and fro'.<sup>121</sup> Thus, these two versions of the same story show that where a true marriage is undertaken (i.e. one in which both parties freely give their consent) the new marital relationship is marked by both shared dining and sexual consummation.<sup>122</sup> Just as the dining might be shared by guests, so the couple might be taken to their bed chamber and put into bed by their guests. In neither case does the sharing of the act diminish its intimate nature.

The significance of the sharing together of drink and food following the exchange of vows lies in the fact that this represents the symbolic embodiment of the responsibilities and duties concerning food which are incumbent upon both husband and wife. To a large extent, as was observed in *The Castle of Labour*, the role of the husband is to act as "bread-winner", to provide the food to sustain his wife and any children they might have together, while the wife is charged with the responsibilities

<sup>118</sup> McSheffrey (ed.), *Love and Marriage*, p. 23.

<sup>119</sup> *The Wedding of Sir Gawain and Dame Ragnell*, in D. B. Sands (ed.), *Middle English Verse Romances* (1966; repr. Exeter, 1997), p. 342, ll. 638-39.

<sup>120</sup> Chaucer, *Riverside Chaucer*, p. 119, l. 1078.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, l. 1085.

<sup>122</sup> The free exchange of consent between two individuals was the thing which constituted the marriage bond in the medieval period: McSheffrey (ed.), *Love and Marriage*, p. 4.



connected with food preparation.<sup>123</sup> For example, it was suggested by a deponent in a marital case in 1365 that a woman should be considered the lawful wife of a certain man because he had provided food, shelter, and clothing for the woman for a year and a half, and had set her at his table alongside his sister.<sup>124</sup> Likewise, when a woman failed in her duty to provide well-cooked food domestic violence could ensue. A Chancery Criminal Inquisition of 1353 records a fight which broke out between a husband and wife over her failure to cook a herring properly; the fight resulted in the death of another man who attempted to defend the beaten woman.<sup>125</sup> Thus, the apparently simple act of sharing drink and perhaps food following the exchange of vows serves to embody fundamental duties of both husband and wife.<sup>126</sup>

Communal eating also served more obviously public functions in the medieval city. As was stated in Chapter 2, one of the occasions on which the skills of the professional cook were called upon was at funerals. It is quite common for medieval inventories and wills to note some sort of presentation of food to be made at the funerals of citizens. The information given might dictate no more than a certain sum was to be paid in funeral expenses for bread and perhaps ale and cheese.<sup>127</sup> Often, however, a more lavish spread is dictated. For example, the inventory of John de Scardeburgh of York (1402) records under funeral expenses sums to be spent on bread, beer, wine, spices, meat, geese, piglets, capons, chickens, partridges and other game, salt and river fish, birds, and various sauces on the both the day of the funeral itself and the week's mind. The preparation of this food required the services of three cooks and their servants.<sup>128</sup> On a slightly smaller scale are the funeral expenses of William de Kexby (1410), which record sums paid for bread, beer, fish, spices, and wine. Yet, this also must have been a reasonably extensive meal as 4*d.* is paid to a cook on the day of the

---

<sup>123</sup> These roles of husband and wife as suppliers and preparers of food are described in the so-called 'Ballad of a Tyrannical Husband': T. Wright and J. O. Halliwell (eds.), *Reliquiae antiquae: Scraps from Ancient Manuscripts, Illustrating Chiefly Early English Literature and the English Language* (London, 1843), 2: 196-99. For a discussion of women's role in the rural household see B. A. Hanawalt, 'Peasant Women's Contribution to the Home Economy in Late Medieval England', in B. A. Hanawalt (ed.), *Women and Work in Pre-Industrial Europe* (Indiana, 1986), pp. 3-19.

<sup>124</sup> Goldberg (ed.), *Women in England*, p. 69.

<sup>125</sup> Transcribed in, E. Rickert (comp.), *Chaucer's World*, ed. C. C. Olson and M. M. Crow (London, 1962), p. 74-75.

<sup>126</sup> I disagree, therefore, with the conclusion that in the Middle Ages there was 'no special action of a ritual nature using any food item as part of the wedding': S. R. Charsley, *Wedding Cakes and Cultural History* (London, 1992), p. 37.

<sup>127</sup> See for example, BIHR, Probate Register 6 226r; BIHR, Probate Register 8, fol. 45 v; BIHR, Probate Register. 8, fol. 96v; Stell and Hampson (eds.), *Probate Inventories*, p. 267.

<sup>128</sup> Stell and Hampson (eds.), *Probate Inventories*, p. 55.



burial and 2s. 7d. for kitchen workers.<sup>129</sup> The inventory of the York weaver, Thomas Catton (1413), records bread being provided at the dirige on the first and next day, along with cheese, wine, beer, mutton, pork, piglets, capons, chickens and cocks, spices, salt fish, salmon, eels, lampreys, eel pies, wheat, and milk, with 3s. 2d. being paid to the cook and other servants. At the week's mind and the next day money was allocated for bread, spices, wine, beer, and various foods.<sup>130</sup> That these occasions were usually opportunities for displays of wealth and ceremony is evident from the will of the York merchant, John Marshall, as he allocates money to be spent on an 'honest dyner to my frendes at the sight of my executors without pompe', suggesting that the usual 'dyner' would have entailed a good deal of 'pompe'.<sup>131</sup>

Many of the wills and inventories give no indication of either who would be expected to consume these foods or where the funeral feast would have been held. However, some wills record separate presentations of food to the local poor and to friends and neighbours. For example, the inventory for William Gale (1472), notes sums to be spent on the day of his burial on bread, beer, cheese, capons, pigeons, pullets, piglets, beef, sheep, calves, spices, vinegar, mustard, peas, wine, salt, and butter, with 2s. 8d. being paid to Ralph the Cook and his servant. Details of those who are to attend this meal are not given. His inventory also records, however, the expenses at his year's mind, which includes money for the purchase of bread, beer, wine, cheese, beef, mutton, spices, sauces, flour, pullets, butter, capons, peas, piglets, and mustard, with 1s. 2d. being paid to the cook, John Gaunton. In the inventory these purchases are clearly marked out for a feast to be held for his friends, chaplains, and neighbours who had attended the year's mind church service. In addition Gale made provisions for donations to the poor to be made on the same occasion, namely gifts of bread to be given to the four leper houses, sixteen *maisons dieux*, and to the prisoners in the city of York and in the King's castle.<sup>132</sup> This suggests friends, neighbours, and the poor of the city were united in remembering the life of William Gale and also praying for his soul, although the poor and more wealthy citizens would not have been gathered together at a single meal to celebrate the memory of this man; issues of social status divide the celebrants.

---

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 60.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 71.

<sup>131</sup> BIHR, Probate Register 9, fol. 357v.

<sup>132</sup> Stell and Hampson (eds.), *Probate Inventories*, pp. 262-64. Similarly, the will of Richard de Taunton of North Street, York (1394) records £10 being spent on funeral refreshments for friends and for distributions of alms to the poor on the day of his funeral: BIHR, Probate Register 1, fol. 63v.



Other medieval funeral feasts are more inclusive. For example, The will of John Plot, citizen and maltman of London (1408) bequeaths three pounds to be spent ‘among my Nybours in mete and in drynke A-bowte the riche & on the pouere’, which suggests a lack of distinction between the foods consumed by bothe the rich and poor.<sup>133</sup> Even more clear is the will of Margaret Kirketon (1456), which bequeaths money so that the local poor and her neighbours should be able to come ‘*ad prandium*’ in her own house on the day of her funeral.<sup>134</sup> Similarly, Jayne Harper (1512) bequeathed money to be spent on spices, wine, bread, and ale and also money on a ‘parish’ dinner to which both the mayor and his officials and the common people were invited.<sup>135</sup> In 1509 Alison Clark left money to be spent on a wake to be held in her own house, at which were to be provided ‘comfettes, sugar plattes and suckittes’ for neighbours and strangers living in Stonegate and Bootham Bar, with the added stipulation that the poor be ‘well and honestly’ fed.<sup>136</sup> Such funeral feasts and can be seen as using the event of an individual’s death and burial as a means of creating and reinforcing a sense of common community, through the absence of emphasis on social hierarchy. Such occasions would have served to strengthen feelings of neighbourliness and bring home the duty of care owed by the local community to the urban poor.<sup>137</sup>

The individual in the medieval city had a plural identity, based, for example, upon his or her status as family member, neighbour, worker, parish resident, and citizen. As can be seen from the evidence of funeral feasts, medieval urban hospitality encompassed more than the entertainment of family or household members; it entailed ideas of neighbourliness, of belonging to a parish community, and of having a responsibility for the local poor. Funeral feasts thus, to a certain extent, reflected this plural identity. However, at funeral feasts, wider communal networks were reinforced at the expense of a single individual: the person who had bequeathed the money to pay for the feast. By contrast, fraternity feasts, whether craft or religious, incorporated their

---

<sup>133</sup> F. J. Furnivall (ed.), *The Fifty Earliest English wills in the Court of Probate London AD 1387-1439; With a Priest’s of 1454*, EETS, OS 78 (1852, repr. 1964), p. 15.

<sup>134</sup> BIHR, Probate Register 2, fols. 330v-31r.

<sup>135</sup> BIHR, Probate Register 8, fol. 98v.

<sup>136</sup> YMA, Probate Register 2, fols. 82r-83v. These are high status items as can be seen from the fact that similar items are amongst the gifts given by the city of York to Henry VIII in 1541: A. Raine (ed.), *York Civic Records IV*, Yorkshire Archaeological Society Record Series 108 (1943), p. 66.

<sup>137</sup> That the urban poor did rely on the generosity of their wealthier neighbours is clear from a marital case in which the credibility of a particular witness, Maud Katersouth, is undermined by the suggestion that she might be open to being bribed into bearing false witness as a result of the fact that she is reduced to begging from, fetching water for, and milling in the homes of her neighbours in return for food: Goldberg (ed.), *Women in England*, pp. 159-160.



members more fully into the occasion of the feast by having each of the members contribute to the cost of their shared meals.<sup>138</sup>

Since George Unwin wrote his seminal study of the London guilds in 1908, there has been increased interest in the structure and functions of English guilds and fraternities.<sup>139</sup> For example, Gervase Rosser has pointed to the vital role played by craft guilds in the cultivation of the good reputations of artisans, which were necessary for the artisan to be able to obtain credit and thus practice their trade.<sup>140</sup> In a similar vein, Ben McRee has investigated the role played by more affluent guilds in preserving the reputations of their members who had fallen on difficult times, through the distribution of charitable support.<sup>141</sup> Particular attention has been paid to the religious or parish guilds, which flourished after the Black Death.<sup>142</sup> These are of specific interest as a consequence of the fact that they brought together individuals, often migrants from a wide range of backgrounds, with the aim of creating a sense of unity and common identity in their disparate members.<sup>143</sup> In many ways it is clear that the medieval fraternity can be seen as a kind of large family or household. Like any other household, it gained its collective identity through the shared experiences and ceremonies of fraternal life, the sharing of common religious devotions, and, in some cases, the mutual obligation of members.<sup>144</sup>

The centrality of dining experiences to household identity and discipline has already been shown in this chapter; if medieval fraternities are to be seen as possessing a household-like structure it would be expected that dining would share a similarly prominent role. Indeed, Caroline Barron has noted that despite the changing functions of

---

<sup>138</sup> For example, the Fraternity of St Katherine, Norwich, ordained that its members should 'eten togeder on her gild day at her commoun costes': T. Smith (ed.), *English Gilds: The Original Ordinances of More than One Hundred Early English Gilds*, EETS, OS 40 (1870), p. 21. The expenses of the fraternity feast were not always borne equally by the members. For example, in 1425 at the feast of the Brewers' Guild in London, each of the members paid 6d. towards the cost of the feast, with the substantial short fall being made up by the masters of the guild: R. W. Chambers and M. Gaunt (eds.), *A Book of London English 1384-1425* (Oxford, 1931), 187-89.

<sup>139</sup> G. Unwin, *The Gilds and Companies of London* (London, 1908).

<sup>140</sup> G. Rosser, 'Crafts, Guilds and the Negotiation of Work in the Medieval Town', *Past and Present* 154 (1997): 3-31.

<sup>141</sup> B. R. McRee, 'Charity and Gild Solidarity in Late Medieval England', *Journal of British Studies* 32 (1993): 195-225.

<sup>142</sup> C. M. Barron, 'The Parish fraternities of Medieval London', in C. M. Barron and C. Harper-Bill (eds.), *The Church in Pre-Reformation Society: Essays in Honour of F. R. H. Du Boulay* (Woodbridge, 1985), pp. 13-37.

<sup>143</sup> See B. R. McRee, 'Unity or Division? The Social Meaning of the Guild Ceremony', in Hanawalt and Reyerson (eds.), *City and Spectacle*, pp. 189-207.

<sup>144</sup> McRee refers to members' pledges to support other members in difficulties as 'a weighty social obligation that transcended ordinary bonds of friendship and neighbourliness and mimicked ties of kinship': McRee, 'Charity and Gild Solidarity', pp. 211-12.



the parish fraternities during the later medieval period, the ‘fraternity feast remains, throughout the period, a constant and important event’.<sup>145</sup> The fraternities themselves sometimes recorded their own perceived view of the importance of shared meals. For example, the Gild of Garlekhithe, London, stated the purpose of its annual feast to be ‘to norishe more knowelech and loue’.<sup>146</sup> The Gild of St Katherine, Stamford, regarded the gathering of their members in their hall to ‘dryncke’ as the opportunity for ‘curteys comunycacion for the weele of the seid Gilde’.<sup>147</sup> Similarly, the Gild of Holy Cross, Stratford-upon-Avon, claimed that their feast in Easter week was held ‘*in tali forma quod fraterna dileccio inter eos augeatur, et turpiloquia repellantur, set pax semper inter eos reformatur, et vera dileccio retineatur*’.<sup>148</sup>

Obviously, to be able to hold such a feast, a reasonably-sized communal dining area would be necessary. Unwin notes that during the later Middle Ages there was a significant rise in the number of fraternities possessing their own halls.<sup>149</sup> Those fraternities which did not have a hall of their own might join together to eat and drink in a local tavern or use the hall of another fraternity.<sup>150</sup> For example, the records of the London Brewers’ Guild in 1423 show their hall as being hired out on various occasions to the ‘Armoureres’, the ‘Fraternite of þe Cros’, the ‘Gerdelers’, the ‘Clerkes’, the ‘barbours’, the ‘Footballpleyers’, the ‘Coupers’, the ‘poyntmakers’, the ‘Ferroours’, the ‘Fraternite of þe trinite’, the ‘yomen of þe Cordewayners’, the ‘Cokes’, the ‘Galochemakers’, the ‘Smythes’, the ‘Foundours’, and the ‘Glasiers’.<sup>151</sup> The records for

<sup>145</sup> Barron, ‘The Parish Fraternities’, p. 25. The term ‘feast’ is somewhat ambiguous as it is difficult to tell what foods were served at such gatherings, with the wealthiest guilds, undoubtedly, serving the most expensive fare. Even where guild accounts exist they can be deceptive. For example, the accounts of Gild of St Mary in Holy Trinity, Hull, from the end of the fifteenth century record purchases of bread, cheese and ale. Yet, the affairs clearly entailed dining on a grander scale as the accounts also record payments made to cooks and spit-turners. Meat may have been donated, therefore, by members of the guild: D. J. F. Crouch, *Piety, Fraternity and Power: Religious Gilds in Late Medieval Yorkshire, 1389-1547* (Woodbridge, 2000), pp. 201-2.

<sup>146</sup> Smith, *English Gilds*, p. 4. For a discussion of the problems involved in using the evidence provided by the 1389 Guild Returns see H. F. Westlake, *The Parish Gilds of Medieval England* (London, 1919), pp. 36-37.

<sup>147</sup> Smith, *English Gilds*, p. 188.

<sup>148</sup> ‘in such a manner that brotherly love shall be cherished among them, and evil-speaking be driven out; that peace shall always dwell among them, and true love be upheld’: *ibid.*, pp. 216-17.

<sup>149</sup> Unwin, *The Gilds and Companies of London*, p. 176.

<sup>150</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 193.

<sup>151</sup> Chambers and Daunt (eds.), *Book of London English*, p. 148. The Brewer’s Guild is studied in detail in J. M. Bennett, ‘Women and Men in the Brewers’ Guild of London’, in E. B. DeWindt (ed.), *The Salt of Common Life: Individuality and Choice in the Medieval Town, Countryside, and Church. Essays Presented to J. Ambrose Raftis* (Kalamazoo, 1995), pp. 182-232. Not possessing one’s own guild hall was not necessarily a sign of a lack of wealth. At the end of the fifteenth century, when the Gild of St Mary in Holy Trinity, Hull, was considered quite wealthy, it hired a hall for its meetings and feasts: Crouch, *Piety, Fraternity and Power*, p. 202.



the same year also show the sums spent on cleaning and preparing the hall before and after the various feasts. For example, the Brewers paid 5½*d.* ‘to an laborer for clensynge of oure halle and gaderynge of chippes owt of þe seide halle and also of dust, with strawynge of russches and settinge of tables yn the seide halles, ageyns þe Feste of þe barbours’; an additional 2*d.* was paid ‘to the same laborer and to a woman, for the clensynge of þe halle after þe seide barbours’.<sup>152</sup>

Both McRee and Rosser remark upon the significance of the formality surrounding the fraternity feast; they suggest that by setting such occasions apart from the quotidian world the fraternities created a kind of privileged space in which special relationships could be forged between individual guild members.<sup>153</sup> Merely from the evidence above regarding the preparation of the hall before feasts, it is clear that fraternity feasts were regarded as possessing a degree of solemnity. Indeed, from the records of the wealthier fraternities it appears that some fraternity halls would have rivalled the halls of the aristocracy in appearance and dignity.<sup>154</sup> From the fact that these guild records often refer to the presence of a high dais it is evident that the guild officials occupied the high status end of the hall, just as the lord did in a private hall.<sup>155</sup> Guild records sometimes also record quantities of napery which would suggest similar

<sup>152</sup> Chambers and Daunt (eds.), *Book of London English*, p. 176. The Guild of Merchant Taylors in London spent 40 *s.* in 1399 on decorating their hall and strewing its floor with rushes before their annual festivities held on the feast of John the Baptist: C. M. Clode (ed.), *Memorials of the Guild of Merchant Taylors of the Fraternity of St John the Baptist in the City of London and Its Associated Chantries and Institutions* (London, 1875), p. 67.

<sup>153</sup> McRee, ‘Unity or Division?’, pp. 191-92; G. Rosser, ‘Going to the Fraternity Feast: Commensality and Social Relations in Late Medieval England’ *Journal of British Studies* 33 (1994): 432.

<sup>154</sup> For example, the London Goldsmith’s Company is described in 1467 as having a hall with a bay window surrounded by armorial bearings, cushions and tapestry covers for the benches bearing the goldsmiths’ arms, a rich Flemish hanging depicting the history of their patron saint, St Dunstan, and a silver-gilt statue of St Dunstan looking out on the hall: W. Herbert, *The History of the Twelve Great Livery Companies of London: Principally Collected from Their Grants and Records* (London, 1834), 2: 225-26. The 1512 inventory of the hall of the London Merchant Taylors’ Guild records various hangings and tapestries depicting St John the Baptist, a gilt image of St John standing in a gilt tabernacle, and a cupboard for the guild’s large collection of plate: Clode (ed.), *Memorials of the Guild of Merchant Taylors*, pp. 82-85. Trinity Hall, which belonged to the York Merchant Adventurers, possessed in 1388 ‘a hallyng of pykture belongyng to the hy deyesse’ and various items of plate: M. Sellers (ed.), *The York Merchant Adventurers 1356-1917*, Surtees Society 129 (1917), pp. 86-87. Although, these descriptions are of halls belonging to very wealthy guilds, and thus not representative of the majority of fraternities, it is not unreasonable to assume that many of the fraternities would have made the dining area a “special” space through the presence of symbolic candles and drinking vessels. See, for example, Smith (ed.), *English Gilds*, pp. 81, 87-88, 95, 177, 178.

<sup>155</sup> The dais in the Grocers’ hall, where the aldermen, wardens, and nine senior members would have dined, was lit by a half-gable window. Unlike the rest of the hall, the dais was paved and had a cupboard and benches, the ends of which were carved in the shape of poppy-heads: P. Nightingale, *A Medieval Mercantile Community: The Grocers’ Company and the Politics and Trade of London 1000-1485* (London, 1995), pp. 413.



dining rituals to those practised in aristocratic hall.<sup>156</sup> However, as the heads of these “households” were transitory, often being subject to annual replacement, they may have had to work harder to ensure their own identity and authority were imprinted upon the fraternity. It may be this that lies behind the memorandum written in the records of the York Merchant Adventurers stating that ‘master Steffallay changed all the wessels before wrettyn in his tyme att meclemes [Michaelmas]’ and ‘maid iij garnis of new vessells and lyvered thaim to maister Jameson quen he was maister’.<sup>157</sup> The changing of the company’s vessels to one’s own design must have been a deeply significant, public, and potentially long-lasting mark of one’s power and authority.<sup>158</sup>

Not only were the settings of fraternity feast similar to those of the a private hall, they were also, likewise, governed by rules of conduct. Many of the 1389 Guild Returns refer to members attending feasts having to wear livery, or being suitably dressed. For example, the ordinances of the Gild of the Conception at Bishop’s Lynn state that no brother or sister should attend the feast ‘in tabard, ne in cloke ne bareleg, ne barefote’.<sup>159</sup> Once inside the hall the members were to behave with due solemnity and self-control. The brothers and sisters of the Gild of the Conception were to make no ‘noyse’ during the feast; if they did so and disobeyed the Dean when he asked for silence, the Dean had the right to beat them or fine them 3*d*. They were also instructed that during the feast no brother or sister was to ‘slepe, ne lete ye cuppe stonde be tyme’.<sup>160</sup> As was stated at the end of the previous chapter, the household table could function as the site for instruction and the inculcation of household values, so the fraternity feast could be used as an opportunity to ensure that the members of the ‘household’ were aware of its rules and values. At the feast of the Gild of the Resurrection of Our Lord in Lincoln, the guild’s

---

<sup>156</sup> See, for example, Clode (ed.), *Memorials of the Guild of Merchant Taylors*, pp. 86-87; Sellers (ed.), *The York Merchant Adventurers*, p. 86. For a study of how the architectural features in medieval guild halls cohered to reinforce the importance of the officials see K. Giles, *The Archaeology of Social Identity: Guildhalls in York, c. 1350-1630*, British Archaeological Reports, British Series 315 (2000), pp. 56-79.

<sup>157</sup> Sellers (ed.), *The York Merchant Adventurers*, p. 87.

<sup>158</sup> The inventory of plate for the London Merchant Taylor’s Guild in 1491 notes the existence of ‘2 basons and 2 ewers, with blak lybardes hedes in armes, of the gyfte of Master Colwiche’, but follows this description with the statement that ‘Thise 2 basyns w<sup>t</sup> 2 eweres to be chaunged into better facioun’: Clode (ed.), *Memorials of the Guild of Merchant Taylors*, p. 82. This may mean that the items had started to appear old fashioned and the company wished them to be transformed into something more modern; alternatively, it might indicate a new master wishing to carve his own presence into the ritual objects of the company. In 1487 the daughter of John Wolke, a member of the Goldsmiths’ Company, gave to Company’s hall ‘five fine cushions of verdone’: not only were they embroidered with the Goldsmiths’ arms, they also incorporated the name of the said John in red and white letters: Herbert, *The History of the Twelve Great Livery Companies*, p. 225.

<sup>159</sup> Smith (ed.), *English Gilds*, p. 87. Ordinances against the making of ‘noyse or ianglynge’ during the feast are very common. See, *ibid.*, pp. 95-96, 98, 100, 104, 107.

<sup>160</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 87-88.



ordinances were read aloud to the members 'so that they be well understood, and that no one may, at any time, be able to say that he has broken, unwittingly, any of the articles which all have thus heard, and to which they have bound themselves'.<sup>161</sup> Unlike the private household, however, the fact that the officials of the fraternities usually changed every year meant that the feast was also the opportunity for the public exchange of leadership and the making evident the accounts and activities of the out-going officials.<sup>162</sup> By having such proceedings take place at the common gathering of the feast, at least the illusion was conveyed of all the members being involved in the processes of selection and auditing. Moreover, if, as at the Gild of St Mary, Beverley, the new alderman and stewards were chosen with the assent of the elder part of the brethren and sistren, then those urban immigrants whom Rosser describes as being 'anxious to transform themselves from the status of *arrivistes* to that of *arrivés*' could feel that they had achieved their goal.<sup>163</sup>

If the fraternities are to be seen as resembling private households, they must be seen as attempting to present themselves as particularly pious households. The decoration of the wealthier guild halls with depictions and images of their patron saints and the lighting of devotional candles at feasts give these halls a quasi-monastic feel.<sup>164</sup> Indeed, the communal drinking vessel which is described as circulating through the hall at some feasts is reminiscent of those sacred vessels shared by the monks in the refectory at Durham.<sup>165</sup> In many ways it is a mistake to look at the feasts of fraternities apart from the religious services which usually preceded them. For example, the Gild of St Mary, Beverley, preceded their feast by a procession to church of their members, carrying large candles. This procession was headed by a guild member clad as the Virgin Mary holding in her arms what seemed like a son, and accompanied by two other guild members dressed as Joseph and Simeon. This religious reverence was continued at the feast itself by praise of the Lord and the Virgin.<sup>166</sup> That guild feasts were intended to have a specifically religious aspect to them is clear from the frequent references to

---

<sup>161</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 176-77.

<sup>162</sup> See, for example, the Gild of St Katherine, Stamford, Smith (ed.), *English Gilds*, pp. 189-90.

<sup>163</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 150; Rosser, 'Crafts, Guilds and the Negotiation of Work', p. 9.

<sup>164</sup> Herbert, *The History of the Twelve Great Livery Companies*, p. 226; Clode (ed.), *Memorials of the Guild of Merchant Taylors*, p. 84; Smith (ed.), *English Gilds*, pp. 177, 178.

<sup>165</sup> Smith (ed.), *English Gilds*, pp. 88, 95, 189; J. Raine (ed.), *A Description or Briefe Declaration of All the Ancient Monuments, Rites, and Customes Belonginge or Beinge Within the Monastical Church of Durham Before the Suppression Written in 1598*, Surtees Society 15 (1842), p. 68.

<sup>166</sup> Smith (ed.), *English Gilds*, pp. 149-50.



prayers said during them.<sup>167</sup> Rosser has remarked on how the giving alms (either in the form of left-over food at the end of the feast, in the manner of a noble household, or in the form of collective donations made by all the guild members) allowed the members to partake in a form of charitable giving which would otherwise be beyond their means, suggesting that it allowed the members to 'appropriate a morally respectable identity, at once honest and philanthropic'.<sup>168</sup> More importantly, this identity was not acquired merely through almsgiving; the collective religious imagery which surrounded the fraternity feast would have contributed to the perception of the brethren and sistren, both by self and others, as reputable and pious members of urban society. Such a perception would have proved invaluable in a community obsessed not only with the state of one's soul, but also with an individual's trustworthiness in matters of trade.

An urban individual might not only gain a generous identity through his or her membership of a guild, the mere fact of being a citizen on occasions would have contributed to the construction of a similar identity. As was suggested in Chapter 2, the civic ideology suggested by customals was that of the city as a place of plenty; practical demonstrations of this plenty took the form of the giving of gifts, often gifts of food. The York House Books abound with references to gifts of food made by the civic government to various members of the royal household, the nobility, and senior officials of the Church.<sup>169</sup> Such gifts were not, of course, altruistic displays of civic generosity. They were rewards for keeping the city abreast of political affairs, demonstrations of thanks for kindnesses shown, and investments calculated to persuade those in positions of power to behave favourably towards the civic government's subsequent requests and complaints. For example, Lorraine Attreed has examined the special relationship enjoyed between the city of York and Richard, Duke of Gloucester, later to become Richard III; this relationship of reciprocal support found practical expression in gifts of food given by the city to Richard.<sup>170</sup> This giving of gifts was not restricted to donations

---

<sup>167</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 173, 177, 217.

<sup>168</sup> Rosser, 'Going to the Fraternity Feast', p. 436.

<sup>169</sup> See, for example, *YHB*, 1: 37, 78, 234, 243, 254, 259, 260, 279, 284, 286-87, 289; R. Davies (ed.), *Extracts from the Municipal Records of the City of York: During the Reigns of Edward IV, Edward V and Richard III* (London, 1843), *passim*; R. B. Dobson, *York City Chamberlains' Account Rolls 1396-1500*, Surtees Society 192 (1978-79), pp. 15, 24, 33, 74-75, 93-94, 110, 126, 137-38, 152, 169-70. A study of the function of food gifts made by the York civic government can be found in H. Cave, 'Politics and Power: Ceremonial Entries into York, 1485-1509' (Unpublished MA Diss., York University, 2001), pp. 52-60.

<sup>170</sup> L. Attreed, 'The Politics of Welcome: Ceremonies and Constitutional Development in Later Medieval English Towns', in Hanawalt and Reyerson (eds.), *City and Spectacle*, pp. 216-19; L. Attreed, *The King's Towns: Identity and Survival in Late Medieval English Boroughs* (Oxford, 2001), pp. 81-84



made to those visiting the city: gifts might be made by civic officials when visiting other cities. For example, whilst in London in 1447, John Shillingford, Mayor of ~~Essex~~<sup>Exeter</sup>, after hearing that the Lord Chancellor desired a 'dys of salt fisshe' for his dinner, gave him 'ij stately pikerallis and ij stately tenchis'.<sup>171</sup> Shillingford's presence in London was as a consequence of a long-standing dispute between the ~~Essex~~<sup>Exeter</sup> civic government and the Bishop of ~~Essex~~<sup>Exeter</sup> over their respective jurisdictions within the city over which the Lord Chancellor was to act as judge; no doubt he hoped that this particular gift would cause the Lord Chancellor to act in the city's favour.

This giving of food gifts mirrored the gift-giving demonstrated by a lord in his noble household.<sup>172</sup> In many ways, the medieval city and the domestic household were not so dissimilar; the medieval city can be identified as a huge household, headed by its lord, the mayor.<sup>173</sup> The mayor was able to employ urban geography in the manner that a nobleman employed his dwelling: the gates provided the ceremonial focus for entry and departure, while the guildhall or similar administrative centre served as the great hall of entertainment. These spaces in the city and the great household similarly served to welcome the outsider and to emphasise the integrity of the community.<sup>174</sup> The most magnificent of these displays was the reception of a monarch into the city. Most studies made of royal entries to cities focus on the role of the monarch in the proceedings and how he is symbolically transformed during the event, while little attention has been paid to the role and representation of the city. Lawrence Bryant, however, in his study of the entries of Henry VI to Paris and London in 1431 and 1432, seeks to show the plurality of voices to be heard within these civic spectacles.<sup>175</sup> His reading of the pageants surrounding the king's entry into London both emphasises the role of the mayor as a kind of 'earl' and also the function of London in morally and materially fashioning the king, even as its citizens served him.<sup>176</sup>

<sup>171</sup> S. A. Moore (ed.), *Letters and Papers of John Shillingford, Mayor of ~~Essex~~<sup>Exeter</sup> 1447-50*, Camden Society, NS 2 (1871), p. 9.

<sup>172</sup> F. Heal, 'Reciprocity and Exchange in the Late Medieval Household', in B. A. Hanawalt and D. Wallace (eds.), *Bodies and Disciplines: Intersections of Literature and History in Fifteenth-Century England* (London, 1996), pp. 179-98.

<sup>173</sup> The mayor would usually be surrounded by servants and assistants, resembling a royal or noble entourage. In public processions, the mayor would demonstrate his lordship through the use of civic regalia, swords, maces, caps of maintenance: Attreed, *The King's Towns*, pp. 73-74.

<sup>174</sup> F. Heal, *Hospitality in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 1990), p. 304.

<sup>175</sup> L. M. Bryant, 'Configurations of the Community in Late Medieval Spectacles: Paris and London during the Dual Monarchy', in Hanawalt and Reyerson (eds.), *City and Spectacle*, pp. 3-33.

<sup>176</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 19-22. Another excellent reading of this royal entrance can be found in G. Kipling, *Enter the King: Theatre, Liturgy, and Ritual in the Medieval Civic Triumph* (Oxford, 1998), pp. 139-69.



Surprisingly, his reading neglects the part played in the proceedings by the representation of the city as a garden of plenty.<sup>177</sup> The king's entry into London is commemorated in a poem, attributed to Lydgate, which appears from '*L'envoye*' to have been commissioned by the mayor.<sup>178</sup> In the fifth pageant, Cheapside was decked as a 'gracious paradys' (l. 363), with three wells from which Mercy, Grace, and Pitee drew up wine. There was nothing particularly unusual in this transformation of Cheapside. At the coronation of Richard II the painted Great Conduit ran with red and white wine, as did a specially created castle at the top end of the market place.<sup>179</sup> The production of a conduit which spouted wine rather than the more usual earthly water fitted in with the overall identification of London as a type of New Jerusalem, with Richard acting as the heavenly bridegroom.<sup>180</sup> In the 1432 pageants a similar messianic narrative can be detected, in which the king is depicted as being filled the gifts of the Holy Spirit, following which he establishes justice on earth, and then creates a new Eden.<sup>181</sup> What is particularly striking about Lydgate's description of the pageant is the emphasis he puts upon the role of the mayor in this creation of 'paradys'.<sup>182</sup> Lydgate plays upon the name of the mayor, John Wells, and the source of these wines with such miraculous qualities:

O! how thes welles ...  
 With here likours moste holsome to atame,  
 Affore devysed notably in dede  
 Forto accorden with the Meirys name (ll. 342-45).

He then goes on to emphasise the vital role played by the mayor in the creation of this paradise: 'That day was busy in alle his gouernaunce,/ Vnto the Kyng fforto done plesaunce' (ll. 347-48). In other words, although ostensibly it is the king who creates

<sup>177</sup> This depiction of London as the place of plenty at this time is particularly ironic, for, as a consequence of the city's reduced financial circumstances, the Common Council was forced to accept a loan from the Chamberlain, John Bederndene, to finance the king's reception: *CLBK*, pp. 129-30.

<sup>178</sup> John Lydgate, 'King Henry VI's Triumphal Entry into London, 21 Feb., 1432', *The Minor Poems of John Lydgate. Part II: Secular Poems*, ed. H. N. MacCracken, EETS, OS 192 (1934; repr. 1961), pp. 630-48.

<sup>179</sup> V. H. Galbraith (ed.), *The Anonimale Chronicle 1333-1381* (Manchester, 1927), p. 108; E. M. Thompson (ed.), *Chronicon Angliae ab anno Domini 1328 usque ad annum 1388 auctore monacho quodam Sancti Albani*. Rolls Series 64 (1874), p. 155.

<sup>180</sup> G. Kipling, 'Richard II's "Sumptuous Pageants" and the Idea of Civic Triumph', in D. M. Bergeron (ed.), *Pageantry in the Shakespearean Theater* (Athens, 1985), pp. 88-89.

<sup>181</sup> R. Osberg, 'The Jesse Tree in the 1432 London Entry of Henry VI: Messianic Kingship and the Rule of Justice', *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 16 (1986): 213-32.

<sup>182</sup> Lydgate's poem is based upon John Carpenter's 'Letter' in Letter-Book K; this letter was probably addressed to Lydgate himself as it refers to 'reverende frater'. The 'Letter' lacks this emphasis on the mayor. Carpenter's 'Letter' is printed in H. T. Riley (ed.), *Munimentiae Gildhallae Londoniensis: Liber albus, Liber custumarum et Liber Horn. Volume III* (London, 1862), pp. 547-64. The relationship between the 'Letter' and Lydgate's poem is discussed in H. N. MacCracken, 'King Henry's Triumphal Entry into London, Lydgate's Poem, and Carpenter's Letter', *Archiv für das Studium der neuern Sprachen und Literaturen* 126 (1911): 75-102.



this new Eden, in reality the “miracle” can only be attained by the invisible good lordship of the mayor. This idea is continued in the descriptions of the trees ‘ffulle of ffruytes lade’ (l. 350) which occupy this New Eden, for the many of the fruits they bear. ‘Orenge, almondis, and the pome-gernade,/ Lymons, dates’ (ll. 352-53), are luxury imported goods which were sold by grocers, to which occupation the mayor belonged.<sup>183</sup> Moreover, the fact that this pageant takes place in the area of London which would normally be the site of food sales cannot but suggest a connection between the everyday plenty of the market, controlled by the mayor and the civic government, and this second Eden. Thus, although the king is given pride of place within the festivities there are implicit reminders both of the importance of keeping London as a thriving commercial centre and also the role of the mayor in the commercial success of the city.

On occasions when the position of king and mayor were reversed, when the mayor was received as a guest at a royal festivity, the mayor was equally conscious of his position as lord of his civic household. For example, in 1464, at the royal feast of the ‘Sargantys of the Coyfe’, which was attended by the mayor and his officers, a perceived slight caused the mayor to leave the feast accompanied by the majority of his brethren and aldermen.<sup>184</sup> The cause of this upset was the fact that the mayor, although regarded within London as ‘next unto the king in all maner thyng’, was upstaged at the time of the washing of the hands by the Earl of Worcester, who was led forward before the mayor and subsequently set down in the middle of the high table, in the place of the mayor. The mayor’s response is telling not only in the fact that he was sufficiently aware of the serious hierarchical implications of this affront to his dignity to walk out, but also because he returned to his own home with the other members of the civic government and set up his own lavish feast. The mayor and his officials soon sat at a feast in the mayor’s house, at which was served the very high-status bird, cygnet, and many other delicacies. Meanwhile, the officials at the royal feast, aware of the folly of upsetting members of the civic government, set about to make amends by sending round gifts of food: ‘mete, brede, wyne, and many dyvere sotelteys’. However, when those delivering the gifts saw the array on the mayor’s own table they were ashamed, as their gifts were of no better quality than the food already on the table. The mayor, aware of the

---

<sup>183</sup> Carpenter’s ‘Letter’ does not give this detailed description of the types of fruit. On the role of grocers in the importing of fruit see E. Power and M. M. Postan, *Studies in English Trade in the Fifteenth Century* (London, 1933), p. 266.

<sup>184</sup> J. Gairdner (ed.), *The Historical Collections of a Citizen of London in the Fifteenth Century*, Camden Society, NS 17 (1876), p. 222.



requirements of courteous behaviour, ensured that the messenger was received with ‘love and thonke for hys massage, and a grette rewarde with alle’.<sup>185</sup>

Clearly, therefore, food was used in the medieval city to help to establish and maintain a large number of relationships, from the very personal relationship between a husband and wife to the very public relationship between a citizen and his monarch. I wish to conclude this chapter by examining a literary text in which many of these complex uses of food can be seen at work, producing specific rhetorical effects.

### *The Book of Margery Kempe*

As stated above, Bynum has focused upon the importance of fasting behaviour to women, and in particular its potential to reveal their sanctity. In *The Book of Margery Kempe* fasting indeed plays a prominent role, but its appearance in the text is most striking when it is exchanged by Margery for an agreement by her husband that he will no longer have sex with her.<sup>186</sup> Julia Long sees this fasting as a form of self-punishment for Margery for her own sexual desires, a punishment which enables her in some unspecified way to obtain freedom from the sexual demands of others: ‘Through the chastising of her own flesh, she gains greater freedom to pursue the religious life she wants’.<sup>187</sup> In fact, what it is that enables Margery to exchange food for sex is the specific connection I noted above regarding the primary connection between ‘bed and board’ in the medieval concept of marriage. For Margery’s husband, eating properly with his wife on Fridays is considered as much a sign of a healthy marriage as having sexual intercourse. What makes the exchange desirable in her husband’s eyes is that their eating together is an event signifying their congenial marital relations which can be observed by outsiders in a way that sexual intercourse is not. Later on the text when Margery and her husband are described as living amicably separate lives the legal *divortium a mensa et thoro* is again brought to mind in the statement, ‘thei partyd asundyr as towchyng to her boord and to her chambrys, and wentyn to boord in divers placys’, with the table being given precedence over the bedroom.<sup>188</sup>

Critics tend to take Margery’s fasting on face value, as an act expressing particular piety. Yet, if one considers what this fasting entails there is nothing

---

<sup>185</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 232.

<sup>186</sup> L. Staley (ed.), *The Book of Margery Kempe*, TEAMS Middle English Texts (Kalamazoo, 1996), p. 38.

<sup>187</sup> J. Long, ‘Mysticism and Hysteria: The Histories of Margery Kempe and Anna O.’, R. Evans and L. Johnson (eds.), *Feminist Readings in Middle English Literature: The Wife of Bath and All Her Sect* (London, 1994), pp. 98-99.

<sup>188</sup> Staley (ed.), *Margery Kempe*, p. 172.



remarkable about it; it seems to consist of abstaining from the consumption of meat and wine on Fridays.<sup>189</sup> To the modern mind this might seem something of a hardship, but when placed in the context of the regular weekday fasting prescribed by the Church it pales into insignificance. As I noted in the previous chapter, in *Pierce the Ploughman's Crede*, Pierce fears that the punishment exacted upon him by his confessor for not knowing his Creed will be enforced fasting on Wednesdays as well as Fridays, which suggests that the laity probably tended to ignore the Wednesday and Saturday fasts, but, nevertheless, routinely adhered to the Friday fast.<sup>190</sup> Moreover, there does not seem to be any particular gender distinction which meant that it was less important for women to fast than men, thus making Margery's fasting particularly virtuous. For example, the advice given by the Knight of the Tower to his daughters is that they should fast 'thre or foure dayes in the weke' until they got married, suggesting that if they cannot manage to fast for three days they should 'at the lest fast fryday in thonoure of the precious blood and of the passion of Ihesu crist that suffred deth for vs'. Moreover, he adds 'yf ye faste it not to brede & water atte lest take no thyng that suffreth deth'.<sup>191</sup>

Thus, Margery's fasting is exceptional neither in severity or timing. Yet it has attracted the attention of not only modern critics but also her contemporaries. Her husband finds it objectionable enough to cause him to be prepared to exchange his conjugal rights for its discontinuation; it offends her confessor; and it also irritates her travelling companions.<sup>192</sup> Why might this be the case? Certainly, Margery herself seems to know of 'anorexic' saints of the Lidwina of Scheidham type, as she refers to Christ's insistence that she gives up the consumption of flesh for the consumption of the Eucharist.<sup>193</sup> It would appear, therefore, that Margery is being constructed for the reader as a fasting saint. As Margery's actual fasting behaviour is not remarkable it is necessary to make it remarkable by having it objected to by her contemporaries. What seems to be occurring is not so much an objection to her fasting *per se* but rather an objection to

---

<sup>189</sup> See, for example, Staley (ed.), *Margery Kempe*, pp. p. 31, 38, 69. There is a single mention of Margery fasting on 'bred and watyr': *ibid.*, p. 22.

<sup>190</sup> H. Barr (ed.), *Pierce the Ploughman's Crede* (London, 1993), p. 61, l. 13.

<sup>191</sup> William Caxton (trans.), *The Book of the Knight of the Tower*, ed. M. Y. Offord, EETS. SS 2 (1971), p. 19. Of course this might imply that on marriage fasting should be abandoned entirely by women. However, the case of Margery Baxter, cited in the previous chapter, who was accused of Lollardy for cooking meat on a fast day, would suggest otherwise: Goldberg (ed.), *Women in England*, p. 295.

<sup>192</sup> Staley (ed.), *Margery Kempe*, p. 69.

<sup>193</sup> 'thu must forsake that thow lovys best in this world, and that is etyng of flesch. And instead of that flesch thow schalt etyn my flesch and myn blod, that is the very body of Crist in the sacrament of the awter': *ibid.*, p. 31. Female saints who gave up the eating of worldly food were commonly referred to as surviving on the Eucharist.



Margery's self-presentation as a variety of 'anorexic' saint. Throughout the text, Margery's manifestations of piety are loud and disruptive. for example, her 'plentyuows terys and boystows sobbyngys, ... lowde cryingys and schille schrykyngys'.<sup>194</sup> Margery appears keen to draw attention to her own pious behaviour; it is unlikely, therefore, although the text does not tell us so, that Margery's fasting was a quiet unostentatious affair. More probably, Margery interrupted normal table decorum to draw attention to her own fasting and to speak of 'the lofe and goodnes of owyr Lord'.<sup>195</sup>

However, Margery is only capable of breaking table decorum to a limited extent, she is still largely under its power. For example, when her travelling companions want to keep her quiet at table they 'madyr hir to sytten at the tabelys ende benethyn alle other that sche durst ful evyl spekyn a word'.<sup>196</sup> Perhaps a more striking example of how food is used in the text to control her behaviour is the affair with the household keys, which occurs near the very beginning of the narrative. When Margery is regarded by her husband to have sufficiently regained her sanity, after an episode of dementia which follows childbirth, she is given back control of the household's food supplies: 'sche ... preyd hir husbond ... that sche mygth have the keys of the botery'.<sup>197</sup> Her husband agrees to this demand, although he is warned that she will 'geve away swech good as ther was'. Thus, when Margery has convinced her husband that she is once again a good and trustworthy wife she is allowed to have back the keys of the larder so that she can control the distribution of the household food. More importantly though, this also means that Margery is able to 'take hir mete and drynke' as and when she desires to. It would appear that part of Margery's punishment for her insanity was to be infantilised by having her meals controlled by others both in content and timing.

While food is used in *Margery Kempe* to show Margery's separation from the rest of society and her rejection by her contemporaries, it is also used to mark her acceptance. Margery is recorded as being invited to eat with important ecclesiastical figures. For example, she is invited to dine with the Bishop of Lincoln where she is 'set to mete wyth many worthy clerkys and prestys and swyers of the Bysshoppys, and the Bysshop hymself sent hir ful gentyllly of hys own mees'.<sup>198</sup> This cannot be read as other than an attempt by Margery to imply acceptance of her religious views by the Church

---

<sup>194</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 109-10.

<sup>195</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 69.

<sup>196</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 70.

<sup>197</sup> Staley (ed.), *The Book of Margery Kempe*, p. 23.

<sup>198</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 47.



authorities. Food is also used to signal her acceptance by her peers; on her travels her rejection or acceptance by the local people is shown by either their failure or willingness to provide her with food.<sup>199</sup> Whilst in Beverley, after having been arrested as a Lollard, Margery's preaching and her status as a good woman is recognised by a housewife, who though hampered by her husband having taken away the keys to the house in which Margery was imprisoned, gets a ladder and gives Margery a pint pot of wine through the window. That this is specifically a gesture of the woman's acceptance of Margery in the face of opposition is evident in her injunction to 'settyn away the pottle prevely and the pece that whan the good man come he myght not aspye it'.<sup>200</sup> The feeding of Margery becomes a form of rejection of (patriarchal) ecclesiastical and secular authority.

What makes Margery's story most remarkable is her ability to make everyday mundane and domestic acts take on a miraculous aspect. For example, Margery's acceptance into the Holy family is marked in simple food terms, for in a vision she sees 'how our Lady ... sat at the mete wyth many worshipful personys and askyd mete for hir'.<sup>201</sup> What is surprising, however, is not this vision itself but the transformation it works upon the following commonplace scene. Margery's vision is realised as an act of practical charity when Margery immediately meets with Dame Margarete Florentyn, who 'comawndyd hir to etyn wyth hir every Sonday and set hir at hir owen tabil abovyn herself and leyd hir mete wyth hir owyn handys'. Thus, by this juxtaposition, an act of household charity takes on a semi-miraculous status.<sup>202</sup> Likewise, a scene in which Margery is given a cup of wine at 'powr womanys hows' by a woman who had a 'lytel manchyldre sowkyng on hir brest' is miraculously transformed by the scene's ability to trigger a vision of 'our Lady and hir sone in tyme of hys Passyon'.<sup>203</sup> By implication, what seems to be revealed here is Margery's view of everyday domestic chores, such as the provision of food, as acts of virtue.

Deborah Ellis describes Margery's marriage as 'uncluttered with domesticity'.<sup>204</sup> Certainly, Margery is not seen participating in the everyday tasks of feeding her husband and children. These domestic chores are relocated in her narrative in order to give them

<sup>199</sup> See, for example, *ibid.*, pp. 73, 83, 98, 99, 101, 108, 110, 113, 121, 129, 144, 159.

<sup>200</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 130.

<sup>201</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 97.

<sup>202</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 97-98.

<sup>203</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 98.

<sup>204</sup> D. S. Ellis, 'Margery Kempe and King's Lynne', in S. J. McEntire (ed.), *Margery Kempe: A Book of Essays* (London, 1992), pp. 139-63.



a spiritual perspective.<sup>205</sup> Despite being the mother of many children, there is no evidence in the text of Margery performing acts of childcare.<sup>206</sup> Indeed, Margery's lapse into insanity might even be seen as an expression of her rejection of the role of wife and mother. Yet, towards the end of the text Margery is forced to care for her husband who has 'turnyd childish agen'. This relocated childcare is given a spiritual status because she is urged to care for him by Christ and she sees this care as punishment for her previous sexual desire of her husband. Moreover, in her own mind, Margery sees these domestic acts as simultaneous spiritual acts performed for Christ: 'sche ... servyd hym and helpyd hym, as hir thowt, as sche wolde a don Crist hymself'.<sup>207</sup> Similarly, the times at which Margery is seen providing food for another are given a special spiritual value. In a vision of the Nativity near the beginning of the text she travels with Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem carrying 'a potel of pyment and spycys' and then once there begs for swaddling cloths to wrap the baby Christ in and also 'mete for owyr Lady and hir blyssyd chyld'.<sup>208</sup> Likewise, in a later vision of the crucifixion on the Virgin Mary's return home Margery 'mad for owr Lady a good cawdel and browt it hir to comfortyn hir'.<sup>209</sup> Again, by relocation within the narrative, a simple domestic gesture is transformed into a semi-miraculous act.

Margery seems to take literally the fact that when an individual performs any of the seven corporal acts of mercy she is performing an act of service for Christ. More importantly, whereas in the Bible these acts of mercy were concentrated on the care of strangers, for Margery they include the care of her own family. Margery is told by Christ, "whan thu dost any sevyse to the and to thin husbond in mete or drynke er any other thyng that is nedful to yow, to thi gostly fadirs, er to any other that thu receyvyst in my name, thu schalt han the same mede in hevyn as thow thu dedist to myn owyn

---

<sup>205</sup> Deborah Ellis discusses the Margery and the household and suggests that the household is the 'inspiration for her personal and artistic achievements'. Her reading of the text differs from mine, however, as she sees the domestic as the sphere which Margery fails to escape rather than as a positive source of her spirituality: D. S. Ellis, 'Margery Kempe and the Virgin's Hot Caudle', *Essays in the Arts and Sciences* 14 (1985): 1-11.

<sup>206</sup> The exception is in a vision of St Anne where she is asked to look after Mary until she is 'twelve yer of age wyth good mete and drynke': *ibid.*, p. 32.

<sup>207</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 173.

<sup>208</sup> An actual occasion on which Margery is shown providing food for another is when she is told to take care of poor woman in Rome as a penance. Margery's suffering is emphasised at this time: she is describe as becoming 'ful of vermyn' as a consequence of caring for the woman. Not only does Margery beg 'mete and wyn' for herself and the woman, she is also shown as making the even greater self sacrifice of drinking the woman's 'sowr wyn' and letting the woman drink her 'good wyn that sche had bowt for hir own selfe': *ibid.*, pp. 90-91.

<sup>209</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 186.



persone er to my blissyd modyr, and I schal thankyn the therfor'''.<sup>210</sup> Thus, in *Margery Kempe* food plays a vital and complex role in the creation of a specific spiritual status for those who are routinely charged with acts of care and nurturing: women. In the second half of the fourteenth century Norfolk was one of the sites of the cult of St Sitha, with an altar to this servant saint appearing in Margery's home town Lynn.<sup>211</sup> St Sitha's appeal has been attributed to 'her ordinary and domestic circumstances' which inspired those 'caught up in the routine of mundane activity'.<sup>212</sup> Perhaps Margery's own piety was inspired by that of Saint Sitha and she was encouraged to produce her *Book* to demonstrate to other pious lay women, in her own inimitable style, that it was possible to achieve sanctity through everyday woman's work in the household.

---

<sup>210</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 192-93.

<sup>211</sup> S. Sutcliffe, 'The Cult of St Sitha in England: An Introduction', *Nottingham Medieval Studies* 37 (1993): 86.

<sup>212</sup> T. Turville-Petre, 'A Middle English Life of St Zita', *Nottingham Medieval Studies* 35 (1991): 105. For further information on St Sitha and female domestic piety in general see M. Goodich, 'Ancilla Dei: The Servant as Saint in the Late Middle Ages', in J. Kirschner and S. Wemple (eds.), *Women of the Medieval World: Essays in Honour of J. H. Mundy* (Oxford, 1987), pp. 119-36; E. Duffy, 'Holy Maydens, Holy Wyfes: The Cult of Women Saints in Fifteenth- and Sixteenth-Century England', in W. J. Sheils and D. Wood (eds.), *Women in the Church: Papers Read at the 1989 Summer Meeting and the 1990 Winter Meeting of the Ecclesiastical History Society*, *Studies in Church History* 27 (1990), pp. 175-96; D. M. Webb, 'Woman and Home: The Domestic Setting of Late Medieval Spirituality', in Sheils and Wood (eds.), *Women in the Church*, pp. 159-173; P. Cullum and J. Goldberg, 'How Margaret Blackburn Taught Her Daughters: Reading Devotional Instruction in a Book of Hours', in J. Wogan-Browne *et al* (eds.), *Medieval Women*, pp. 217-36.



## Conclusion

It was the intention of this thesis to examine the ideological and symbolic uses of food within the urban environment. In the process of my work I have identified various ideologies competing, co-existing, and intersecting within the medieval city. These ideologies all possess their own moral agenda and rhetoric. In looking at the health aspects of medieval food I have shown that foods were thought to possess fixed medicinal values and also that in certain circumstances food and health could take on a wider social perspective. Within Lydgate's 'Dietary' I have shown that there is a concatenation of health: he who keeps his own body healthy, keeps his household healthy, and helps to keep society healthy. The householder is shown to have a responsibility for his own health and the health of the social relations fostered at his table. These ideas were explored further in Chapter 4 in the concepts of hospitality and conviviality. Hospitality within the medieval city is shown to maintain and strengthen the bonds formed between individuals within the community, whether those bonds were matrimonial responsibilities between a husband and wife or the responsibilities of the citizen for the feeding of the urban poor.

Ideas surrounding the feeding of the poor also appeared in both Chapter 2 and Chapter 3. In Chapter 2 I started from the premise that the provision of the body's basic needs was necessary for the maintenance of the peaceful city. Through a study of civic legislation it was revealed that civic government was concerned not with ideas of necessity but with plenty and the representation of the city as a centre of consumerism. In the rhetoric of plenty which surrounded civic food legislation the urban community was shown as possessing a responsibility for the health of the market, which is depicted as possessing the potential to be wounded and harmed in the manner of a person. In civic food legislation ideas of necessity receive very little attention, thus I have suggested that the Church's rhetoric on gluttony may have been employed to ensure that the poor were not neglected. In addition I have suggested that the Church's teaching on gluttony may have acquired a particular relevance within the urban environment because the links between drunkenness and uncontrolled speech may have played upon fears regarding the betraying of masters' secrets by apprentices. In general, I think the relationship between popular preaching and civic ideologies is a neglected area of study which would repay future research.



In addition I have touched upon issues of gender and food. I have suggested that ideas surrounding the working man eating may have been tied to concepts of masculinity, and may have been used to underwrite an employers' work ethic that attempted to get the maximum amount of work from the employee: to be a man meant to work hard and to pay minimal attention to food whilst working. I have also suggested that women may have belonged to communities which recognised shared ideals and friendships by the sharing of food. In my reading of *The Book of Margery Kempe* I have shown that ideas surrounding women's provisioning of the body's basic needs have been given a quasi-miraculous status. Thus women's work in daily life is given recognition and value.<sup>1</sup>

In the writing of this thesis I have been very much aware that any single chapter is worthy of a thesis in itself. I make no pretence that this is the final word on any of the issues discussed in this thesis, but then it was never intended to be the final word, but rather a thematic exploration designed to bring fresh thinking to the ways in which was food perceived and manipulated in the medieval city. Consequently there are many areas suitable for future research. I have chosen to focus on the cities of London and York and have, on the whole drawn similar conclusions for these two areas. The civic ethos of plenty represented so fully in London legislation is less clearly visible in York legislation, although similar ideas are certainly present on a smaller scale, and perhaps with more extant documentation could have been more fully drawn. Further research would be useful, therefore, on the various themes explored in this thesis within other cities and towns in order to see if these findings hold true for the country at large. In addition, art historical sources are under-represented in this work; a systematic study of, for example, woodcuts from early English printed books for evidence of dining practices would be a valuable addition to the material in this thesis. Likewise, I have made minimal use of archaeological data, the incorporation of which would produce a much richer reading of dining practices in the medieval city. Moreover, the conclusions I have drawn regarding issues of food and gender are, I am sure, just a fraction of those waiting to be drawn. I think there is scope for a substantial study of gendered behaviour

---

<sup>1</sup> How one wishes to interpret this depends upon whether one sees *The Book of Margery Kempe* as being written about an actual woman and describing a woman's experience of life, or whether one sees the text and Margery as rhetorical devices used to ratify patriarchal ecclesiastical authority: S. Rees Jones, "'A peler of Holy Cherch': Margery Kempe and the Bishops", J. Wogan-Browne *et al.* (eds.), *Medieval Women: Texts and Contexts in Late Medieval Britain. Essays for Felicity Riddy* (Turnhout, 2000), pp. 377-91.



surrounding food. I hope my own work will stimulate future study in this area which deserves greater attention.



## **Bibliography.**

### **Manuscripts.**

#### **London**

##### **British Library**

MS Additional, 38131.

MS Egerton, 2572 (microfilm).

MS Sloane, 4.

MS Sloane, 5.

##### **Corporation of London Record Office**

Letter-Book I (microfilm MCFP/ 59).

##### **Public Record Office**

C 1/ 64/ 1158.

#### **York**

##### **Borthwich Institute of Historical Research**

CP. E. 40.

CP. E. 121.

CP. E. 159.

CP. F. 36.

CP. F. 46.

CP. F. 104.

CP. F. 174.

CP. F. 237.

Episcopal Register 11

Probate Register 1.

Probate Register 2.

Probate Register 3.

Probate Register 6.

Probate Register 8.

Probate Register 9.

Probate Register 13B.



Probate Register 17.

York Minster Archives

MS Additional, 2.

M2/6c.

M2/6d.

Probate Register 1.

Probate Register 2

**Primary.**

Anderson, J. J., ed. *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, Pearl, Cleanness, Patience*.  
London, 1996.

Aquinas, Thomas. *Summa theologiae*. Ed. T. Gilby. Vol. 43. London, 1963.

Aquinas, Thomas, *Summa theologiae*. Ed. J. Fearon. Vol. 45. London, 1969.

Aristotle. *Nichomachean Ethics*. Trans. T. Irwin. Cambridge, 1985.

Arnould, E. J., ed. *Le livre de seyntz medicines: The Unpublished Devotional Treatise of Henry of Lancaster*. Oxford, 1940.

Attreed, L. C., ed. *The York House Books 1461-1490. Volume 1: House Books One and Two/ Four*. Stroud, 1991.

Attreed, L. C., ed. *The York House Books 1461-1490. Volume 2: House Books Five-Six*.  
Stroud, 1991.

Baildon, W. P., ed. *Notes on the Religious Houses of Yorkshire*. Yorkshire  
Archaeological Society Record Series 17. 1895.

Baker, D. C., Murphy, J. L., and Hall, Jr., L. B., eds. *The Late Medieval Religious Plays of Bodleian MSS Digby 133 and E Museo 160*. EETS, OS 283. 1982.

Banks, M. M., ed. *An Alphabet of Tales: An English 15<sup>th</sup> Century Translation of The Alphabetum narrationem of Etienne de Besançon from Additional MS 25,719 of the British Museum*. EETS, OS 126, 127. 1904-5.

Barclay, Alexander. *The Castle of Labour*. London, 1505.

Barr, H., ed. *Pierce the Ploughman's Crede*. London, 1993.

Barratt, A., ed. *The Knowing of Woman's Kind in Childing: A Middle English Version of Material Derived from the Trotula and Other Sources*. Medieval Women: Texts and Contexts 4. Turnhout, 2001.

Basevorn, Robert. 'The Form of Preaching'. Trans. L. Krul. *Three Medieval Rhetorical Arts*. Ed. J. J. Murphy. London, 1971. Pp. 109-215.



- Bede, *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People*. Ed. and trans. B. Colgrave and R. A. B. Mynors. Oxford, 1969.
- Bennet, J. A. W., and Smithers, G. V., eds. *Early Middle English Verse and Prose*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. Oxford, 1968.
- Blades, W., ed. *The Gouernayle of Helthe with the Medecyne of ye Stomacke. Reprinted from Caxton's Edition (Circa M. CCC. XCI)*. London, 1858.
- Bowers, R. H., ed. 'De pestilencia'. *Southern Folklore Quarterly* 20 (1956): 120-25.
- Brandeis, A., ed. *Jacob's Well: An Englisht Treatise on the Cleansing of Man's Conscience Edited from the Unique MS. About 1440 AD in Salisbury Cathedral*. EETS, OS 115. 1900.
- Brereton, G. E., and J. M. Ferrier., eds. *Le Mesnagier de Paris*. Paris, 1994.
- Byrne, M. S. C., ed. *The Lisle Letters*. Vol. 4. London, 1981.
- Calendar of the Patent Rolls Preserved at the Public Record Office Prepared Under the Superintendence of the Deputy Keeper of the Records: Richard II. Vol. V. AD 1396-1399*. 1901; repr. Nendeln, 1971.
- Carpenter, C. *Kingsford's Stonor Letters and Papers 1290-1481*. Cambridge, 1996.
- Caxton, William. *The Book of Fayttes of Armes and Chyvalrye: Translated and Printed by William Caxton from the French Original by Christine de Pizan*. Ed. A. T. P. Bayliss. EETS, OS 189. 1937.
- Caxton, William, trans. *The Book of the Knight of the Tower*. Ed. M. Y. Offord. EETS, SS 2. 1971.
- Chambers, R. W., and Gaunt, M., eds. *A Book of London English 1384-1425*. Oxford, 1931.
- Chaucer, Geoffrey. *The Riverside Chaucer*. Ed. L. D. Benson. 3<sup>rd</sup> edn. Oxford, 1987.
- Chew, H. M., and Kellaway W., eds. *London Assize of Nuisance 1301-1431: A Calendar*. London Record Society 10. 1973.
- Copland, Robert. 'The Highway to the Spital-House.' *The Elizabethan Underworld: A Collection of Tudor and Early Stuart Tracts and Ballads Telling of the Lives and Misdoings of Vagabonds, Thieves, Rogues and Cozeners, and Giving some Account of the Operation of the Criminal Law*. Ed. A. V. Judges. London, 1930. Pp. 1-25



- Cox, J. E., ed. *Writings and Disputations of Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, Martyr, 1556, Relative to the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper*. Parker Society 17. 1884.
- Davies, R., ed. *Extracts from the Municipal Records of the City of York: During the Reigns of Edward IV, Edward V and Richard III*. London, 1843.
- Dean, J. M., ed. *Medieval English Political Writings*. TEAMS Middle English Texts. Kalamazoo, 1996.
- Dean, T., ed. and trans. *The Towns of Italy in the Later Middle Ages*. Manchester, 2000.
- Diekstra, F. M., ed. *Book for a Simple and Devout Woman: A Late Middle English Adaptation of Peraldus' Summa de vitiis at virtutibus and Friar Laurent's Somme le roi*. Groningen, 1998.
- Dobson, R. B., ed. *York City Chamberlains' Account Rolls 1396-1500*. Surtees Society 192 (1978-79).
- Dyboski, R., ed. *Songs, Carols, and Other Miscellaneous Poems, from the Balliol MS. 354, Richard Hill's Commonplace Book*. EETS, ES 101. 1908; repr. 1937.
- Eccles, M., ed. *The Macro Plays: The Castle of Perseverance, Wisdom and Mankind*. EETS, OS 262. 1969.
- Evans J., and Serjeantson, M. S., eds. *English Medieval Lapidaries*. EETS, OS 190. 1933.
- Evelyn, C. D., ed. *Peter Idley's Instructions to His Son*. Oxford, 1935.
- Fitz Stephen, William. 'A Description of the Most Noble City of London'. *English Historical Documents 1042-1189*. Ed. D. C. Douglas and G. W. Greenaway. 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. London, 1981. Pp. 1024-30.
- Francis, W. N., ed. *The Book of Vices and Virtues: A Fourteenth Century English Translation of Somme le roi of Lorens d'Orleans, Edited from Three Extant Manuscripts*. EETS, OS 217. 1942; repr. 1968.
- Furnivall, F. J., ed. *The Fifty Earliest English Wills in the Court of Probate London AD 1387-1439: With a Priest's of 1454*. EETS, OS 78. 1852; repr. 1964.
- Furnivall, F. J., ed. *Caxton's Book of Curtesye Printed at Westminster about 1477-78 AD*. EETS, ES 3. 1868; repr. 1973.
- Furnivall, F. J., ed. *The Babees Book ... The Bokes of Nurture ... Wynkyn de Worde's Booke of Kervynge ... Seager's School of Vertue, etc. etc.* EETS, OS 32. 1868; repr. 1969.



- Furnivall, F. J. *Andrew Boorde's Introduction and Dyetary, with Barnes in the Defence of the Berde*. EETS, ES 10. 1870; repr. 1973.
- Furnivall, F. J., and Stone, W. G., eds. *The Tale of Beryn with a Prologue of the Merry Adventure of the Pardoner with a Tapster at Canterbury: Re-Edited from the Duke of Northumberland's Unique Manuscript*. EETS, ES 105. 1909; repr. 1975.
- Galbraith, V. H., ed. *Anonimale Chronicle 1333-1381*. Manchester, 1927.
- Gairdner, J., ed. *The Historical Collections of a Citizen of London in the Fifteenth Century: Containing John Page's Poem on the Siege of Rouen, Lydgate's Verses on the Kings of England, William Gregory's Chronicle of London*. Camden Society, NS 17. 1876.
- Getz, F. M., ed. *Healing and Society in Medieval England: A Middle English Translation of the Pharmaceutical Writings of Gilbertus Anglicus*. Wisconsin Publications in the History of Science and Medicine 8. Wisconsin, 1991.
- Goldberg, P. J. P., ed. and trans. *Women in England c. 1275-1525: Documentary Sources*. Manchester, 1995.
- Gower, John. *The Complete Works of John Gower: Edited from the Manuscripts with Introductions, Notes and Glossaries. Vol. 1: The French Works*. Ed. G. C. Macaulay. 1889; repr. Michigan, 1968.
- Gower, John. *The Complete Works of John Gower: Edited from the Manuscripts with Introductions, Notes and Glossaries. Vol. 3: The English Works: Confessio Amantis, Lib. V. 1971-Lib VIII: and In Praise of Peace*. Ed. G. C. Macaulay. 1901; repr. Michigan, 1968.
- Gower, John. *Mirour de l'omme (The Mirror of Mankind)*. Trans. W. B. Wilson. Medieval Texts and Studies 5. East Lansing, 1992.
- Grant, E., ed. *A Source Book in Medieval Science*. Cambridge, Mass., 1974.
- Grant, M., trans. *Galen on Food and Diet*. London, 2000.
- Green, R. L., ed. *The Early English Carols*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. Oxford, 1977.
- Griffiths, J., ed. *Speculum peccatorum: The Mirror of Sinners Printed in London by Wynkyn de Worde c. 1509-10*. London, 1992.
- Hanna III, R. *The Awyntyrs of Arthure at the Terne Wathelyn*. Manchester, 1974.
- Harrington, Sir John. *The School of Salernum: Regimen sanitatis Salerni*. Rome, 1959.



- Hale, W., ed. *A Series of Precedents and Proceedings in Criminal Causes, Extending from the Year 1475 to 1640: Extracted from the Act-Books of the Ecclesiastical Courts of the Diocese of London, Illustrative to the Discipline of the Church of England*. 1847; repr. Edinburgh, 1973.
- Hamilton Thompson, A., ed. *Visitations of Religious Houses in the Diocese of Lincoln*. 3 vols. Lincoln Record Society 7, 15, 21. 1914-29.
- Harris, M. D., ed. *The Coventry Leet Book or Mayor's register Containing the Records of the City Court Leet or View of Frank Pledge, AD 1420-1555, with Divers Other Matters*. EETS, OS 134, 135, 138, 146. 1907-1913.
- Hector, L. C., and Harvey, B. F., ed. and trans. *The Westminster Chronicle 1381-1394*. Oxford, 1982.
- Hieatt, C. B., and Butler, S., ed. *Curye on Inglysch: English Culinary Manuscripts of the Fourteenth Century (Including the Forme of Cury)*. EETS, SS 8. 1985.
- Hoccleve, Thomas. *Hoccleve's Works: The Minor Poems*. Ed. F. J. Furnivall. EETS, ES 61, 73. 1970.
- Holmstedt, G. *Speculum Christiani: A Middle English Religious Treatise of the Fourteenth Century, Edited from All Known MSS and One Old Edition, with Introduction, Notes, Glossary, Index of Names and Quotations, a Table and Appendices*. EETS, OS 182. 1933; repr. 1971.
- Horstman, C., ed. *Yorkshire Writers: Richard Rolle of Hampole and His Followers*. Vol. 2. London, 1896.
- Horstmann, C., ed. *The Minor Poems of the Vernon MS: Part I*. EETS, OS 98. 1892.
- Horstmann, K., ed. 'Orlogium sapientiae or the Seven Poyntes of Trewe Wisdom, aus MS Douce 114'. *Anglia* 10 (1888): 323-89.
- Hudson, A., ed. *English Wycliffite Sermons*. 5 Vols. Oxford, 1983-96.
- Hudson, W., and Tingey, J. C., eds. *Selected Records of the City of Norwich*. Vol. 1. Norwich 1906.
- Kaueper, R. W., and E. Kennedy. *The Book of Chivalry of Geoffroi de Charny: Text, Context and Translation*. Philadelphia, 1996.
- Kerling, N. J., ed. *Cartulary of St Bartholomew's Hospital, Founded 1123: A Calendar*. London, 1973.
- Kingsford, C. L., ed. *A Survey of London by John Stow Reprinted from the Text of 1603: With Introduction and Notes*. 2 vols. Oxford, 1908.



- Langland, William. *Piers Plowman: The C Version. Will's Vision of Piers Plowman, Do-Well, Do-Better and Do-Best. An Edition in the Form of Huntingdon Library MS HM143, Corrected and Restored from the Known Evidence, With Variant Readings*. Ed. G. Russell and G. Kane. London, 1997.
- Langland, William. *The Vision of Piers Plowman: A Critical Edition of the B-Text Based on Trinity College Cambridge MS B.15.17*. Ed. A. V. C. Schmidt. 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. London, 1995.
- Latini, Brunetto. *The Book of the Treasure (Li livre dou trésor)*. Trans. P. Barrette and S. Baldwin. Garland Library of Medieval Literature 90. London, 1993.
- Lavynham, Richard. *A Litil Tretys on the Seven Dedly Sins: Edited with an Introduction, Notes, a Glossarial Index etc from MS Harley 211 in the British Museum, with Variants from Thirteen Other Copies*. Ed. J. P. W. M. V. Zutphen. Rome, 1956.
- Love, Nicholas. *Nicholas Love: The Mirroure of the Blessed Lif of Jesu Crist*. Ed. J. Hogg and L. F. Powell. 2 vols. Analecta Carthusiana 91. Salzburg, 1989.
- Lumiansky, R. M., and Mills, D., eds. *The Chester Mystery Cycle*. EETS, SS 3. 1974.
- Lydgate, John. *The Minor Poems of John Lydgate Edited from All available MSS., with an Attempt to Establish the Lydgate Canon: Part I*. Ed. H. N. MacCracken. EETS, ES 107. 1911; repr. 1961.
- Lydgate, John. *The Minor Poems of Jon Lydgate Edited from All Available MSS., with an Attempt to Establish the Lydgate Canon: Part II: Secular Poems*. Ed. H. N. MacCracken. EETS, OS 192. 1934; repr. 1961.
- Lydgate, John. *Troy Book: Selections*. Ed. R. R. Edwards. TEAMS Middle English Texts. Kalamazoo, 1998.
- McCann, J., ed. and trans. *The Rule of Saint Benedict in Latin and English*. London, 1952.
- McSheffrey, S., ed. and trans. *Love and Marriage in Late Medieval London*. TEAMS Middle English Texts. Kalamazoo, 1995.
- Manzalaoui, M. A., ed. *Secretum secretorum: Nine English Versions*. Volume 1. EETS, OS 276. 1977.
- Migne, J. P., ed. *Patrologia Latina*. Vol. 76. Turnhout. n.d
- Moore, N., ed. *The Book of the Foundation of St Bartholomew's Church in London*. EETS, OS 163. 1923.



- Moore, S. A., ed. *Letters and Papers of John Shillingford, Mayor of ~~Essex~~<sup>Essex</sup> 1447-50*. Camden Society NS 2. 1871.
- More, Thomas. *Utopia. The Complete Works of Thomas More. Volume 4. Utopia*. Ed. E. Surtz and J. H. Hexter. London, 1965.
- Morris, R., ed. *Legends of the Holy Rood, Symbols of the Passion and Cross-Poems in Old English of the Eleventh, Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries*. EETS, OS 46. 1881; repr. 1969.
- Mustanoja, T. F., ed. *The Goodwife Taught Her Daughter, The Good Wife Wold a Pylgremage, The Thewis of Gud Women*. Annales Academia Scientiarum Fennicae B 61/ 2. Helsinki, 1948.
- Myers, A. R., ed. *The Household of Edward IV: The Black Book and the Ordinance of 1478*. Manchester, 1959.
- Nelson, V., ed. *A Mirour to Lewd Men and Wymmen: A Prose Version of the Speculum vitae, ed. from B. L. MS Harley 45*. Heidelberg, 1981.
- Nelson, W., ed. *A Fifteenth Century School Book*. Oxford, 1956.
- Nichols, J. G., ed. *The Diary of Henry Machyn, Citizen and Merchant-Taylor of London, from AD 1550-1563*. Camden Society 42. 1848.
- Nolcken, C. V., ed. *The Middle English Translation of the Rosarium theologie: A Selection from Cbr., Gonville and Caius Coll. MS 354/ 581*. Middle English Texts 10. Heidelberg, 1979.
- Ogden, M. S. *The Cyrurgie of Guy de Chauliac*. EETS, OS 265. 1971.
- Pantin, W. A. *The English Church in the Fourteenth Century*. Notre Dame, 1962.
- Peacock, E., ed. *Instructions for Parish Priests by John Myrc: Edited from Cotton MS Claudius A. II*. EETS, OS 31. 1868.
- Percy, J. W. *York Memorandum Book*. Surtees Society 186. 1973.
- Powell, S., ed. *The Advent and Nativity Sermons Edited from a Fifteenth-Century Revision of John Mirk's Festial: Ed from B. L. MSS Harley 2247, Royal 18 B XXI and Gloucester Cathedral Library 22*. Middle English Texts 13. Heidelberg, 1981.
- Powicke, F. M., and Cheney, C. R., eds. *Councils and Synods with Other Documents Relating to the English Church: II AD 1205-1313. Part I: 1205-1265*. Oxford, 1964.



- Powicke, F. M., and Cheney, C. R., eds. *Councils and Synods with Other Documents Relating to the English Church: II AD 1205-1313. Part II: 1265-1313*. Oxford, 1964.
- Prestwich, M. *York Civic Ordinances, 1301*. Borthwick Papers 49. York, 1976.
- Raine, A. *York Civic Records IV*. Yorkshire Archaeological Society Record Series 108. 1943.
- Raine, J. *A Description or Briefe Declaration of All the Ancient Monuments, Rites, and Customes Belonginge or Beinge Within the Monastical Church of Durham Before the Suppression Written in 1598*. Surtees Society 15. 1842.
- Raine, J., ed. *The Fabric Rolls of York Minster with an Appendix of Illustrative Documents*. Surtees Society 35. 1858.
- Raine, J., ed. *The Historians of the Church of York and Its Archbishops*. Rolls Series 71. Vol. 2. London, 1886.
- Rickert, E., comp. *Chaucer's World*. Ed. C. C. Olson and M. M. Crow. London, 1962.
- Riley, H. T., ed. *Munimenta Gildhallae Londoniensis: Liber albus, Liber custumarum et Liber Horn. Vol. I: Liber albus*. Rolls Series 12. London, 1859.
- Riley, H. T., ed. *Munimenta Gildhallae Londoniensis: Liber albus, Liber custumarum et Liber Horn. Vol. II Part I: Liber custumarum with Extracts from the Cottonian MS. Claudius, D.II*. Rolls Series 12. London, 1860.
- Riley, H. T., ed. *Munimenta Gildhallae Londoniensis: Liber albus, Liber custumarum et Liber Horn. Vol. II Part II: Liber custumarum with Extracts from the Cottonian MS. Claudius, D.II*. Rolls Series 12. London, 1860.
- Riley, H. T., ed. *Munimenta Gildhallae Londoniensis: Liber albus, Liber custumarum et Liber Horn. Vol. III: Translation of the Anglo-Norman Passages in Liber albus, Glossaries, Appendices, and Index*. Rolls Series 12. London, 1862.
- Riley, H. T., ed. *Liber albus: The White Book of the City of London*. London, 1861.
- Riley, H. T., ed. *Memorials of London and London Life in the XIIIth, XIVth, and XVth Centuries*. London, 1868.
- Robbins, R. H., ed. *Secular Lyrics of the XIVth and XVth Centuries*. Oxford, 1955.
- Ross, W. O., ed. *Middle English Sermons Edited from British Museum MS Royal 18B. xxiii*. EETS, OS 209. 1940.
- Rothwell, H., ed. *English Historical Documents, 1189-1327*. London, 1975.



- Rowland, B., ed. *Medieval Woman's Guide to Health: The First English Gynecological Handbook*. Kent, Ohio, 1981.
- Rule, M., ed. *Eadmeri historia novum in Anglia et opuscula duo de vita sancti Anselmi et quibusdam miraculis ejus*. London, 1884.
- Sands, D. B., Ed. *Middle English Verse Romances*. 1966; repr. Exeter, 1997.
- Sellers, M., ed. *York Memorandum Book: Part I (1376-1419). Lettered A/ Y in the Guildhall Muniment Room*. Surtees Society 120. 1911.
- Sellers, M., ed. *York Memorandum Book: Part II (1388-1493). Lettered A/ Y in the Guildhall Muniment Room*. Surtees Society 125. 1915.
- Sellers, M., ed. *The York Mercers and Merchant Adventurers 1365-1917*. Surtees Society 129. 1917.
- Shaff, P., and Wace, H., eds. *A Selected Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*. 2nd edn. Vol. 11. Michigan, 1978. Pp. 201-90.
- Sharpe, R. R., ed. *Calendar of Letter-Books Preserved Among the Archives of the City of London at the Guildhall: Letter-Book B. Circa AD 1275-1312*. London, 1900.
- Sharpe, R. R., ed. *Calendar of Letter-Books Preserved Among the Archives of the City of London at the Guildhall: Letter-Book D. Circa AD 1309-1314*. London, 1902.
- Sharpe, R. R., ed. *Calendar of Letter-Books Preserved Among the Archives of the City of London at the Guildhall: Letter-Book F. Circa AD 1337-1352*. London, 1904.
- Sharpe, R. R., ed. *Calendar of Letter-Books Preserved Among the Archives of the City of London at the Guildhall: Letter-Book G. Circa AD 1352-1374*. London, 1905.
- Sharpe, R. R., ed. *Calendar of Letter-Books Preserved Among the Archives of the City of London at the Guildhall: Letter-Book H. Circa AD 1375-1499*. London, 1907.
- Sharpe, R. R., ed. *Calendar of Letter-Books Preserved Among the Archives of the City of London at the Guildhall: Letter-Book I. Circa AD 1400-1422*. London, 1909.
- Sharpe, R. R., ed. *Calendar of Letter-Books Preserved Among the Archives of the City of London at the Guildhall: Letter-Book K. Temp. Henry VI*. London, 1911.
- Sharpe, R. R., ed. *Calendar of Letter-Books Preserved Among the Archives of the City of London at the Guildhall: Letter-Book L. Temp. Edward IV-Henry VII*. London, 1912.
- Sharpe, R. R., ed. *Calendars of Coroners Rolls of the City of London AD 1300-1378*. London, 1913.



- Simmons, T. F., and Nolloth, H. E., eds. *The Lay Folk's Catechism or the English and Latin Versions of Archbishop Thoresby's Instructions for the People: Together with a Wycliffite Adaptation of the Same, and the Corresponding Canons of the Council of Lambeth*. EETS, OS 118. 1901.
- Skelton, John. *The Complete Works of John Skelton Laureate*. Ed. P. Henderson. London, 1959.
- Smeltz, J. W., ed. 'Speculum vitae: An Edition of British Museum Manuscript Royal 17C. viii'. Unpublished PhD. Diss., Duquesne University, 1977.
- Smith, T., ed. *English Gilds: The Original Ordinances of More than One Hundred Early English Gilds*. EETS, OS 40. 1870.
- Smithers, G. V., ed. *Havelok*. Oxford, 1987.
- Staley, L., ed. *The Book of Margery Kempe*. TEAMS Middle English Texts. Kalamazoo, 1996.
- Stell, P. M., and Hampson, L., eds. *Probate Inventories of the York Diocese 1350-1500*. York, 1999.
- Tanner, N. P., ed. *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils. Volume 1: Nicaea I to Lateran V*. London, 1990.
- Thomas, A. H., ed. *Calendar of Plea and Memoranda Rolls Preserved Among the Archives of the Corporation of the City of London at the Guildhall. AD 1364-1381*. Cambridge, 1929.
- Thomas, A. H., ed. *Calendar of Select Pleas and Memoranda Rolls Preserved Among the Archives of the Corporation of the City of London at the Guildhall. AD 1381-1412*. Cambridge, 1932.
- Thomas, A. H., ed. *Calendar of Plea and Memoranda Rolls Preserved Among the Archives of the Corporation of the City of London at the Guildhall. AD 1413-1437*. Cambridge, 1943.
- Thompson, E. M., ed. *Chronicon Angliae ab anno Domini 1328 usque ad annum 1388 auctore monacho quodam Sancti Albani*. Rolls Series 64. 1874.
- Tolkien, J. R. R., ed. *The English Text of Ancrene Riwe from MS Corpus Christi Cambridge 402*. EETS, OS 249. 1962.
- Treharne, E., ed. *Old and Middle English: An Anthology*. Oxford, 2000.



- Trevisa, John. *On the Properties of Things: John Trevisa's Translation of Bartholomæus Anglicus De proprietatibus rerum*. Ed. M. C. Seymour. 2 vols. London, 1975.
- Trevisa, John. *The Governance of Kings and Princes: John Trevisa's Middle English Translation of the De regimine principum of Aegidius of Rome*. Ed. D. C. Fowler et al. New York, 1997.
- Trigg, S., ed. *Wynnere and Wastoure*. EETS, OS 297. 1990.
- Upton-Ward, J. M., ed. and trans. *The Rule of the Templars: The French Text Of the Rule of the Order Of the Knights Templar*. Woodbridge, 1992.
- Usk, Thomas. *The Testament of Love*. Ed. R. A. Shoaf. TEAMS Middle English Texts. Kalamazoo, 1998.
- Villanova, Arnald of. *Regimen sanitatis ad regem Aragonum*. Ed. L. García-Ballester and M. R. McVaugh. Arnaldi de Villanova: Opera medica omnia. Vol. 10.i. Barcelona, 1996.
- Warner, G., ed. *The Libelle of Englyshe Polycye: A Poem on the Use of Sea-Power 1436*. Oxford, 1926.
- Wenzel, S., ed. *Fasciculus morum: A Fourteenth-Century Preacher's Handbook*. London, 1989.
- Whitford, Richard. *A Werke for Houshoulders, or for Them that Haue the Gydyngge or Gouvernaunce of Ony Company: Gadred and Set Forth by a Professed Brother of Syon, Rycharde Whytforde*. London, 1530.
- Wood-Leigh, K. L., ed. *A Small Household of the XVth Century: The Account Book of Munden's Chantry Bridport*. Manchester, 1956.
- Woolgar, C. M., ed. *Household Accounts from Medieval England*. 2 vols. British Academy Record of Social and Economic History 17-18. 1992-93.
- Wright, T. *Anglo-Saxon and Old English Vocabularies. Volume 1: Vocabularies*. Ed. R. P. Wülker. 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. 1884; repr. Darmstadt, 1968.
- Wright, T., and Halliwell, J. O., eds. *Reliquiae antiquae: Scraps from Ancient Manuscripts Illustrating Chiefly Early English Literature and English Language*. 2 vols. 1841-43; repr. New York, 1966.
- Wriothesley, Charles. *A Chronicle of England During the Reigns of the Tudors from AD 1485 to 1559. Volume II*. Camden Society NS 20. 1877.



Zerbi, Gabriele. *Gerontocomia: On the Care of the Aged*. Ed. and trans. L. R. Lind. Memorials of the American Philosophical Society 182. Philadelphia, 1988.

**Secondary.**

Adams, R. 'The Nature of Need in *Piers Plowman* XX'. *Traditio* 34 (1978): 273-301.

Aers, D. 'Piers Plowman and Problems in the Perception of Poverty: A Culture in Transition'. *Leeds Studies in English* NS 14 (1983): 5-25.

Aers, D. 'Piers Plowman: Poverty, Work, and Community'. *Community, Gender, and Individual Identity: English Writing 1360-1430*. London, 1988. Pp. 20-72.

Amos, M. A. "'For Manners Maketh Man": Bourdieu, De Certeau, and the Common Appropriation of Noble Manners in the *Book of Courtesy*'. *Medieval Conduct*. Ed. K. Ashley and R. L. A. Clark. Medieval Cultures 29. London, 2001. Pp. 23-48.

Amundsen, D. W. 'Medieval Canon Law on Medical and Surgical Practice by the Clergy'. *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 52 (1978): 22-44.

Appleby, J. 'Consumption in Early Modern Social Thought'. *Consumption and the World of Goods*. Ed. J. Brewer and R. Porter. London, 1993. Pp. 162-73.

Archer, I., Barron, C., and Harding, V., eds. *Hugh Alley's Caveat: The Markets of London in 1598. Folger MS V. a. 318*. London Topographical Society Publication 137. 1988.

Arnold, H. 'The Kitchens of Medieval York: The Evidence of the Inventories'. *York Historian* 16 (1999): 2-9.

Arrizabalaga, J. 'Facing the Black Death: Perceptions and Reactions of University Medical Practitioners'. *Practical Medicine from Salerno to the Black Death*. Ed. L. García-Ballester *et al.* Cambridge, 1994. Pp. 237-88.

Aston, H. 'Oxford's Medieval Alumni'. *Past and Present* 74 (1977): 1-40.

Attreed, L. 'The Politics of Welcome: Ceremonies and Constitutional Development in Later Medieval English Towns'. *City and Spectacle in Medieval Europe*. Ed. B. A. Hanawalt and K. Reyerson. Medieval Studies at Minnesota 6. London, 1994. Pp. 208-31.

Attreed, L. *The King's Towns: Identity and Survival in Late Medieval English Boroughs*. Oxford, 2001.



- Ball, R. M. 'The Education of the English Parish Clergy in the Later Middle Ages with Particular Reference to the Manuals of Instructions'. Unpublished PhD. Diss, Cambridge University, 1976.
- Barron, C. [M.]. *The Medieval Guildhall of London*. London, 1974.
- Barron, C. M. 'The Parish Fraternities of Medieval London'. *The Church in Pre-Reformation Society: Essays in Honour of F. R. H. Du Boulay*. Ed. C. M. Barron and C. Harper-Bill. Woodbridge, 1985. Pp. 13-37.
- Barron, C. [M.]. 'London and Parliament in the Lancastrian Period'. *Parliamentary History: Parliament and Communities in the Middle Ages*. Ed. C. Rawcliffe and L. Clarke. Oxford, 1990. Pp. 343-67.
- Barron, C. [M.]. 'The Later Middle Ages:1270-1520'. *The British Atlas of Historic Towns. Volume III: The City of London from Prehistoric Times to c. 1520*. 1989; repr. Oxford, 1991. Pp. 42-56.
- Barron, C. [M.]. 'Centre of Conspicuous Consumption: The Aristocratic Town House in London, 1200-1550'. *London Journal* 20 (1995): 1-16.
- Barron, C. M. 'London 1300-1540'. *The Cambridge Urban History of Britain: Volume I. 600-1540*. Ed. D. M. Palliser. Cambridge, 2000. Pp. 395-440.
- Bazell, D. M. 'Christian Diet: A Case Study Using Arnald Of Villanova's *De esu carni*'. Unpublished PhD Diss., Harvard, 1991.
- Beardsworth, A., and Keil, T. *Sociology on the Menu: An Invitation to the Study of Food and Society*. London, 1997.
- Beck, T. R. *The Cutting Edge: Early History of the Surgeons of London*. London, 1974.
- Bedos-Rezak, B. 'Towns and Seals: Representations and Signification in Medieval France'. *Towns and Townspeople in Medieval and Renaissance Europe: Essays in Memory of J. K. Hyde*. Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester 72. 1990. Pp. 35-48.
- Bedos-Rezak, B. 'Civic Liturgies and Urban Records in Northern France, 1000-1400'. *City and Spectacle in Medieval Europe*. Ed. B. A. Hanawalt and K. L. Reyerson. Medieval Studies at Minnesota 6. London, 1994. Pp. 34-55.
- Bell, R. M. *Holy Anorexia*. London, 1985.
- Bennett, H. S. 'Science and Information in English Writings of the Fifteenth Century'. *Modern Language Review* 39 (1944): 1-8.



- Bennett, J. M. 'Conviviality and Charity in Medieval and Early Modern England'. *Past and Present* 134 (1992): 19-41
- Bennett, J. M. 'Women and Men in the Brewers' Guild of London'. *The Salt of Common Life: Individuality and Choice in the Medieval Town, Countryside, and Church. Essays Presented to J. Ambrose Raftis*. Ed. E. B. DeWindt. Kalamazoo, 1995. Pp. 181-232.
- Bennett, J. M. *Ale, Beer, and Brewsters in England: Women's Work in a Changing World, 1300-1600*. Oxford, 1996.
- Bennett, J. M. 'Reply'. *Past and Present* 154 (1997); 235-42.
- Benson, R. G. *Medieval Body Language: A Study of the Use of Gesture in Chaucer's Poetry*. *Anglistica* 21. 1980.
- Biebel, E. M. 'Pilgrims to Table: Food Consumption in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*', *Food and Eating in Medieval Europe*. Ed. M. Carlin and J. T. Rosenthal. London, 1998. Pp. 15-26.
- Binkley, P. 'Preachers' Responses to Thirteenth-Century Encyclopaedism'. *Pre-Modern Encyclopaedic Texts: Proceedings of the Second COMERS Conference, Groningen, 1-4 July, 1996*. Ed. P. Binkley. Leiden, 1997. Pp. 75-88.
- Bird, R. *The Turbulent London of Richard II*. London, 1949.
- Bloomfield, M. W. *The Seven Deadly Sins: An Introduction to the History of a Religious Concept, with Special Reference to Medieval English Literature*. Michigan, 1952.
- Bloomfield, M. W. et al., eds. *Incipits of Latin Works on the Virtues and Vices, 1100-1500 AD: Including a Section of Incipits of Works on the Pater noster*. Cambridge, Mass., 1979.
- Blythe, J. H. 'Sins of the Tongue and Rhetorical Prudence in *Piers Plowman*'. *Literature and Religion in the Later Middle Ages: Philological Studies in Honor of Siegfried Wenzel*. Ed. R. G. Newhauser and J. A. Alford. New York, 1995. Pp. 119-42.
- Boffey, J., and J. J. Thompson. 'Anthologies and Miscellanies: Production and Choice of Texts'. *Book Production and Publishing in Britain 1375-1475*. Ed. J. Griffiths and D. Pearsall. Cambridge, 1989. Pp. 279-315.
- Bornstein, D. *Mirrors of Courtesy*. Connecticut, 1975.
- Bossy, J. *Christianity in the West, 1400-1700*. Oxford, 1983.



- Bowers, J. M. “‘Dronkenesse is ful of stryvyng’: Alcoholism and Ritual Violence in Chaucer’s *Pardoner’s Tale*’. *English Literary History (ELH)* 57 (1990): 757-84.
- Bowsky, W. M. *A Medieval Italian Commune: Siena Under the Nine, 1287-1355*. London, 1981.
- Boyle, L. E. ‘The *Oculus sacerdotibus* and Some Other Works of William of Pagula’. *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 5<sup>th</sup> series 5 (1955): 81-110.
- Boyle, L. E. ‘The *Summa* for Confessors as Genre and its Religious Intent’. *The Pursuit of Holiness in Late Medieval and Renaissance Religion: Papers from the University of Michigan Conference*. Ed. C. Trinkhaus and H. A. Oberman. Leiden, 1974. Pp. 126-37.
- Boyle, L. E. ‘Robert Grosseteste and the Pastoral Care’. *Medieval and Renaissance Studies: Proceedings of the Southeastern Institute of Medieval and Renaissance Studies, Summer 1976*. Ed. D. J. B. Randall. Durham, N. C., 1979. Pp. 3-51.
- Boyle, L. E. ‘The Fourth Lateran Council and Manuals of Popular Theology’. *The Popular Literature of Medieval England*. Ed. T. J. Heffernan. Knoxville, 1985. Pp. 30-43.
- Braekman, W. L. *Studies on Alchemy, Diet, Medecine [sic] and Prognostication in Middle English*. Scripta: Medieval and Renaissance Texts 22. 1986.
- Braswell, M. F. *The Medieval Sinner: Characterization and Confession in the Literature of the Middle Ages*. London, 1983.
- Bray, R. S. *Armies of Pestilence: The Effects of Pandemics on History*. Cambridge, 1996.
- Brears, P. ‘The Food Guilds in York’. *Feeding A City: York. The Provision of Food from the Roman Times to the Beginning of the Twentieth Century*. Ed. E. White. Totnes, 2000. Pp. 79-100.
- Brewer, D. ‘Medieval feasts’. *A Companion to the Gawain Poet*. Ed. D. Brewer and J. Gibson. Cambridge, 1997). Pp. 131-42.
- Brewer, T. *Memoir of the Life and Times of John Carpenter, Town Clerk of London in the Realm of Henry V and Henry VI and Founder of the City of London School with an Appendix of Documents and Particulars of Benefaction to the School*. London, 1856.



- Briggs, C. F. *Giles of Rome's De regimine principum: Reading and Writing Politics at Court and University, c. 1275-c. 1525*. Cambridge, 1999.
- Britnell, R. H. 'Forestall, Forestalling and the Statute of Foresters'. *English Historical Review* 102 (1987): 89-102.
- Britnell, R. H. *Growth and Decline in Colchester, 1300-1540*. Cambridge, 1986.
- Britnell, R. H. 'Morals, Laws and Ale in Medieval England'. *Le droit et sa perception dans la littérature et les mentalités médiévales: Actes du colloque de centre d'études médiévales de Picardie, Amiens, 17-19 mars, 1989*. Ed. D. Buschinger. Göppingen, 1993. Pp. 21-29.
- Britnell, R. H. *The Commercialisation of English Society 1000-1500*. Cambridge, 1993.
- Britnell, R. [H.]. 'The Black Death in English Towns'. *Urban History* 21 (1994): 195-210.
- Bryant, L. M. 'Configurations of Community in Late Medieval Spectacles: Paris and London during the Dual Monarchy'. *City and Spectacle in Medieval Europe*. Ed. B. A. Hanawalt and K. L. Reyerson. Medieval Studies at Minnesota 6. London, 1994. Pp. 3-33.
- Bullough, V. L. 'Training of the Nonuniversity-Educated Medical Practitioners in the Later Middle Ages'. *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences* 14 (1959): 446-58.
- Bullough, V. L. 'Medical Study at Medieval Oxford'. *Speculum* 36 (1961): 600-12.
- Bullough, V. L. 'Population and the Study and Practice of Medieval Medicine'. *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 36 (1962): 62-69.
- Bullough, V. L. 'The Term "Doctor"'. *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences* 18 (1963): 284-87.
- Bürgel, J. C. 'Secular and Religious Features of Medieval Arabic Medicine'. *Asian Medical Systems: A Comparative Study*. Ed. C. Leslie. London, 1967. Pp. 44-62.
- Burke, P. 'Res et verba: Conspicuous Consumption in the Early Modern World'. *Consumption and the World of Goods*. Ed. J. Brewer and R. Porter. London, 1993. Pp. 148-61.
- Burkholder, K. M. '"Attempree Diete Was Al Hir Phisik": The Medieval Application of Medical Theory to Feasting'. *Essays in Medieval Studies* 13 (1996): 15-29.
- Burrow, J. A. 'Gestures and Looks in *Piers Plowman*'. *Yearbook of Langland Studies* 14 (2000): 75-83.



- Bylebyl, J. J. 'Galen on the Non-Natural Causes and the Variations of the Pulse'. *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 45 (1971): 482-85.
- Bynum, C. W. 'Fast, Feast, and Flesh: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women'. *Representations* 11 (1985): 1-25.
- Bynum, C. W. *Holy Feast and Holy Fast: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women*. London, 1987.
- Cadden, J. *Meanings of Sex Difference in the Middle Ages*. Cambridge, 1993.
- Campbell, B. N. S., et al. *A Medieval Capital and Its Grain Supply: Agrarian Production and Its Distribution in the London Region c. 1300*. Historical Geography Research Series 30. London, 1993.
- Carlin, M. *Medieval Southwark*. London, 1996.
- Carlin, M. 'Fast Food and Urban Living Standards in Medieval England'. *Food and Eating in Medieval Europe*. Ed. M. Carlin and J. Rosenthal. London, 1998. Pp. 27-51.
- Carruthers, L. M. 'The Liturgical Setting of *Jacob's Well*'. *English Language Notes* 24 (1986-87): 11-24.
- Carruthers, L. M. 'Richard Lavynham and the Seven Deadly Sins in *Jacob's Well*'. *Fifteenth Century Studies* 18 (1991): 17-32.
- Carruthers, L. M. "'Know Thyself': Criticism, Reform and the Audience of *Jacob's Well*". *Medieval Sermons and Society: Cloister, City, University*. Ed. J. Hamesse et al. Louvain-La-Neuve, 1998. Pp.219-40.
- Catalogue of Additions to the Manuscripts in the British Museum in the Years 1911-1915. Part I: Descriptions*. Vol. 19a. 1925; repr. London, 1969.
- Cave, H. 'Politics and Power: Ceremonial Entries into York, 1485-1509'. Unpublished MA Diss., York University, 2001.
- Charsley, S. R. *Wedding Cakes and Cultural History*. London, 1992.
- Cherry, J. '*Imago castelli*: The Depiction of Castles on Medieval Seals'. *Châtea Gaillard* 15 (1990): 83-90.
- Christianson, C. P. 'A Century of the Manuscript-Book Trade in Late Medieval London'. *Medievalia et humanistica*, NS 12 (1984): 143-65.
- Cipolla, C. N. *Cristofano and the Plague: A Study of the History of Public Health in the Age of Galileo*. London, 1973.



- Clark, J. 'Trinovatum - The Evolution of a Legend'. *Journal of Medieval History* 7 (1981): 135-51.
- Clark, P. 'The Alehouse and Alternative Society'. *Puritans and Revolutionaries: Essays in Seventeenth-Century History Presented to Christopher Hill*. Ed. D. Pennington and K. Thomas. Oxford, 1973. 47-72.
- Clark, P. *The English Alehouse: A Social History 1200-1830*. London, 1983.
- Clay, R. M. *The Medieval Hospitals of England*. London, 1909.
- Clode, C. M., ed. *Memorials of the Guild of Merchant Taylors of the Fraternity of St John the Baptist in the City of London and Its Associated Chuntries and Institutions*. London, 1875.
- Clune, G. *The Medieval Guild System*. Dublin, 1943.
- Coleman, J. *Early English Literature in History 1300-1400: Readers and Writers*. London, 1981.
- Conrad, L. I. 'The Arab-Islamic Medical Tradition'. *The Western Medical Tradition: 800 BC to AD 1800*. Ed. L. I. Conrad *et al.* Cambridge, 1995. Pp. 93-138.
- Cook, H. J. *The Decline of the Old Medical Regime in Stuart London*. London, 1986.
- Corner, G. R. 'On Some Ancient Inns of Southwark'. *Surrey Archaeological Collections* 2 (1864): 50-81.
- Cosman, M. P. *Fabulous Feasts: Medieval Cookery and Ceremony*. New York, 1976.
- Cox, H. O. *Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Oxford Colleges*. 1892; repr. East Ardsley, 1972.
- Cressy, D. 'Purification, Thanksgiving and the Churching of Women in Post-Reformation England'. *Past and Present* 141 (1993): 106-46.
- Crouch, D. J. F. *Piety, Fraternity and Power: Religious Gilds in Late Medieval Yorkshire, 1389-1547*. Woodbridge, 2000.
- Cullum, P. H. 'Hospitals and Charitable Provision in Medieval Yorkshire, 936-1547'. Unpublished PhD Diss., York University, 1989.
- Cullum, P. H. '"And Hir Name was Charite": Charitable Giving By and For Women in Late Medieval Yorkshire'. *Woman is a Worthy Wight: <sup>women</sup>in English Society c. 1200-1500*. Ed. P. J. P. Goldberg. Stroud, 1992. Pp. 182-211.
- Cullum, P., and Goldberg, J. 'How Margaret Blackburn Taught Her ~~D~~ughters; Reading and Devotional Instruction in a Book of Hours'. *Medieval Women: Texts and Contexts in Late Medieval Britain. Essays for Felicity Riddy*. Ed. J. Wogan-



- Browne *et al.* *Medieval Women: Texts and Contexts* 3. Turnhout, 2000. Pp. 217-36.
- Cunningham, A. 'Transforming Plague: The Laboratory and the Identity of Infectious Disease'. *The Laboratory Revolution in Medicine*. Ed. A. Cunningham and P. Williams. Cambridge, 1992. Pp. 209-44.
- Denley, M. 'Elementary Teaching and Middle English Didactic Writing'. *Langland, the Mystics and the Medieval Religious Tradition*. Ed. H. Phillips. Cambridge, 1990. Pp. 223-41.
- Déry, C. A. 'Food and the Roman Army: Travel, Transport and Transmission (with Particular Reference to the Province of Britannia)'. *Food on the Move: Proceeding of the Oxford Symposium on Food and Cookery 1996*. Ed. H. Walker. Totnes, 1997. Pp. 84-96.
- Dobson, [R.] B. 'Mendicant Ideals and Practice in Late Medieval York'. *Archaeological Papers from York Presented to M. W. Barley*. Ed. P. V. Addyman and V. E. Black. York, 1984. Pp. 109-22.
- Dobson, R. B. 'The Religious Orders 1370-1540'. *The History of the University of Oxford. Volume 2: Late Medieval Oxford*. Ed. J. I. Catto and R. Evans. Oxford, 1992. Pp. 539-79.
- Dobson, [R.] B. 'General Survey 1300-1540'. *The Cambridge Urban History of Britain: Volume 1. 600-1540*. Ed. D. M. Palliser. Cambridge, 2000. Pp. 273-90.
- Douglas, M. 'Deciphering a Meal'. *Implicit Meanings: Essays in Anthropology*. London, 1975. Pp. 249-75.
- Douie, D. I. *Archbishop Pecham*. Oxford, 1952.
- Doyle, A. I. 'A Survey of the Origins and Circulation of Theological Writings in English in the 14<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> and Early 16<sup>th</sup> Centuries with Special Consideration of the Part of the Clergy Therein'. Unpublished PhD Diss., Cambridge University, 1953.
- Duffy, E. 'Holy Maydens. Holy Wyfes: The Cult of Women Saints in Fifteenth- and Sixteenth-Century England. *Women in the Church: Papers Read at the 1989 Summer Meeting and the 1990 Winter Meeting of the Ecclesiastical History Society*. Ed. W. J. Sheils and D. Wood. Studies in Church History 27. 1990. Pp. 175-96.
- Duggan, L. G. 'Fear and Confession on the Eve of the Reformation'. *Archiv für Reformationgeschichte* 75 (1984):153-75.



- Dunlop, F. S. 'Watching You Watching Me: Audiences and Performers in Late Medieval Halls'. Unpublished Paper, York University, November 2001.
- Dunlop, F. S. 'Male Adolescence and Youth in the Early Tudor Interludes *Fulgens and Lucres* and *Nature* by Henry Medwall; *Mundus et Infans*; *Youth*; and *Calisto and Melebea*'. PhD Diss., York University, forthcoming.
- Dupont, F. 'The Grammar of Roman Dining'. *Food: A Culinary History from Antiquity to the Present*. Ed. J.-L. Flandrin and M. Montanari. New York, 1999. Pp. 113-27.
- Durkin, P. 'Examining One's Conscience: A Survey of Late Middle English Prose Forms of Confession'. *Leeds Studies in English*, NS 28 (1997): 19-56.
- Dyer, C. 'English Diet in the Later Middle Ages'. *Social Relations and Ideas: Essays in Honour of R. H. Hilton*. Ed. T. H. Aston *et al.* Cambridge, 1983. Pp. 191-216.
- Dyer, C. *Everyday Life in Medieval England*. London, 1994.
- Dyer, C. *Standards of Living in the Middle Ages: Social Change in England c. 1200-1520*. Revised edn. Cambridge, 1998.
- Dyer, C. 'Did the Peasants Really Starve in Medieval England?'. *Food and Eating in Medieval Europe*. Ed. M. Carlin and J. T. Rosenthal. London, 1998. Pp. 53-71.
- Dyer, C. 'Work Ethics in the Fourteenth Century'. *The Problem of Labour in Fourteenth-Century England*. Ed. J. Bothwell, P. J. P. Goldberg, W. M. Ormrod. Woodbridge, 2000. Pp. 21-41.
- Dyer, C. *Making A Living in the Middle Ages: The People of Britain 850-1520*. London, 2002.
- Elias, N. *The Civilizing Process: The History of Manners and State Formation and Civilization*. Trans. E. Jephcott. Oxford, 1994. Originally published as *Über den Prozess der Zivilisation*. 2 vols. Basel, 1939.
- Ellis, D. S. 'Margery Kempe and the Virgin's Hot Caudle'. *Essays in Arts and Sciences* 14 (1985): 1-11.
- Ellis, D. S. 'Margery Kempe and King's Lynne'. *Margery Kempe: A Book of Essays*. Ed. S. J. McEntire. Garland Casebook 4. London, 1992. Pp. 139-63.
- Emmerson, R. K., and Goldberg, P. J. P. "'The Lord Geoffrey had me made": Lordship and Labour in the Luttrell Psalter'. *The Problem of Labour in Fourteenth-Century England*. Ed. J. Bothwell, P. J. P. Goldberg, and W. M. Ormrod. Woodbridge, 2000. Pp. 43-63.



- Fabbri, N. R., and Rutenburg, N. 'The Tabernacle of Orsanmichele in Context'. *Art Bulletin* 63 (1981): 385-405.
- Falkenburg, R. L. *The Fruit of Devotion: Mysticism and the Imagery of Love in Flemish Paintings of the Virgin and Child, 1450-1550*. Trans. S. Herman. Amsterdam, 1994.
- Fay, I. 'Medical Practitioners and the Civic Body: Negotiating Healing Authority in Late Medieval London'. Unpublished MA Diss., York University, 2001.
- Feldges-Henning, U. 'The Pictorial Programme of the Salla della Pace: A New Interpretation'. *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institute* 35 (1972): 145-62.
- Fidanza, F. 'Diets and Dietary Recommendations in Ancient Greece and Rome and the School of Salerno'. *Progress in Food and Nutrition Science* 3 (1979): 79-99.
- Figlio, K. 'Chlorosis and Chronic Disease in Nineteenth-Century Britain: The Social Construction of Somatic Illness in Capitalist Society'. *Social History* 3 (1978): 167-97.
- Fisher, F. J. 'The Development of London as a Centre of Conspicuous Consumption in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries'. *Transaction of the Royal Historical Society*, 4<sup>th</sup> Series 30 (1948): 37-50.
- Fisher, J. H. 'Chancery and the Emergence of Standard Written English in the Fifteenth Century'. *Speculum* 52 (1977): 870-99.
- Fisher, J. H. 'Chancery Standard and Modern Written English'. *Journal of the Society of Archivists* 6 (1979): 136-44.
- Fisher, J. H. 'Chaucer and the Written Language'. *The Popular Literature of Medieval England*. Ed. T. J. Heffernan. Tennessee Studies in Literature 28. Knoxville, 1985. Pp. 237-51.
- Förster, M. 'John Lydgate's "Gesundheitsregeln"'. *Anglia* 42 (1918): 176-91.
- Foss, D. B. 'John Mirk's *Instructions for Parish Priests*'. *The Ministry: Clerical and Lay*. Ed. W. J. Sheils and D. Wood. Studies in Church History 26. 1989. Pp. 131-40.
- Fradenburg, L. O. 'Needful Things'. *Medieval Crime and Social Control*. Ed. B. A. Hanawalt and D. Wallace. Medieval Cultures 16. London, 1994. Pp. 49-69.
- Friedman, J. B. 'Books, Owners and Makers in Fifteenth-Century Yorkshire: The Evidence from Some Wills and Extant Manuscripts'. *Latin and Vernacular:*



- Studies in Late-Medieval Texts and Manuscripts*. Ed. A. J. Minnis. Cambridge, 1989. Pp. 111-27.
- Galloway, J. A. 'Driven by Drink? Ale Consumption and the Agrarian Economy in the London Region, c. 1300-1400'. *Food and Eating in Medieval Europe*. Ed. M. Carlin and J. T. Rosenthal. London, 1998. Pp. 87-100.
- Galloway, J. A., and Murphy, M. 'Feeding the City: Medieval London and Its Agrarian Hinterland'. *London Journal* 16 (1991): 3-14.
- Ganim, J. M. 'The Experience of Modernity in Late Medieval Literature: Urbanism, Experience and Rhetoric in Some Early Descriptions of London. *The Performance of Middle English Culture: Essays on Chaucer and the Drama in Honor of Martin Stevens*. Ed. J. J. Paxson, L. M. Clopper, and S. Tomasch. Cambridge, 1998. Pp. 77-96.
- García-Ballester, L. 'Dietetic and Pharmacological Therapy: A Dilemma Amongst Fourteenth-Century Practitioners in the Montpellier Area'. *Essays in the History of Therapeutics*. Ed. W. F. Bynum and V. Nutton. *Clio medica* 22. 1991. Pp. 23-37.
- García-Ballester, L. 'Changes in the *Regimina sanitatis*: The Role of Jewish Physicians'. *Health, Disease and Healing in Medieval Culture*. Ed. S. Campbell. London, 1992. Pp. 119-31.
- Gee, E. 'Discoveries at the Frater at Durham'. *Archaeological Journal* 123 (1966): 69-78.
- Geremeck, B. *Poverty: A History*. Trans. A. Kolakowska. Oxford, 1994.
- Getz, F. M. 'Gilbertus Anglicus Anglicized'. *Medical History* 26 (1982): 436-42.
- Getz, F. [M.] 'John Mirfield and the *Breviarum Bartholomei*: The Medical Writings of a Clerk at St Bartholomew's Hospital in the Later Fourteenth Century'. *Society for the Social History of Medicine* 37 (1985): 24-26.
- Getz, F. M. Review of R. S. Gottfried, *Doctors and Medicine in Medieval England 1340-1530* (Princeton, 1986). *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 61 (1987): 455-61.
- Getz, F. M. 'Charity. Translation and the Language of Medical Learning in Medieval England'. *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 64 (1990): 1-17.
- Getz, F. M. 'Medical Practitioners in Medieval England'. *Social History of Medicine* 3 (1990): 245-83.



- Getz, F. M. 'The *Method of Healing* in Middle English'. *Galen's Method of Healing: Proceedings of the 1982 Galen Symposium*. Ed. F. Kudlien and R. J. Durling. Leiden, 1991. Pp. 147-56.
- Getz, F. M. 'The Faculty of Medicine Before 1500'. *The History of the University of Oxford*. Ed. J. Catto and R. Evans. Vol. 2. Oxford, 1992. Pp. 373-405.
- Getz, F. M. 'Medical Education in Later Medieval England'. *The History of Medical Education in Britain*. Ed. V. Nutton and R. Porter. *Clio medica* 30. 1995. Pp. 76-93.
- Getz, F. M. *Medicine in the English Middle Ages*. Princeton, 1998.
- Gibson, G, M. 'Blessing from Sun and Moon; Churching as Women's Theatre'. *Bodies and Disciplines: Intersections of Literature and History in Fifteenth-Century England*. Ed, B. A. Hanawalt and D. Wallace. *Medieval Cultures* 9. London, 1996. Pp. 139-54
- Gilchrist, R. 'Christian Bodies and Souls: The Archaeology of Life and Death in Later Medieval Hospitals'. *Death in Towns: Urban Responses to the Dying and the Dead, 100-1600*. Ed. S. Bassett. Leicester, 1992. Pp. 101-118.
- Gilchrist, R. *Contemplation and Action: The Other Monasticism*. London, 1995.
- Giles, K. *The Archaeology of Social Identity: Guildhalls in York, c. 1350-1630*, British Archaeological Reports, British Series 315. 2000.
- Gillespie, V. 'The Literary Form of the Middle English Pastoral Manual, with Particular Reference to the *Speculum Christiani* and Some Related Texts'. Unpublished PhD. Diss., Oxford University. 1981.
- Gillespie, V. '*Doctrina* and *predicacio*: The Design and Function of Some Pastoral Manuals'. *Leeds Studies in English*, NS 11 (1986): 36-50.
- Gillespie, V. 'Vernacular Books of Religion'. *Book Production and Publishing in Britain 1375-1475*. Ed. J. Griffiths and D. Pearsall. Cambridge, 1989. Pp. 317-44.
- Giorgi, J. 'Diet in Medieval and Early Modern London: The Archaeological Evidence'. *The Age of Transition: The Archaeology of English Culture 1400-1600. Proceedings of a Conference Hosted by the Society for Medieval Archaeology and the Society for Post-Medieval Archaeology at the British Museum, London, 14-15<sup>th</sup> November 1996*. Ed. D. Gaimster and P. Stamper. The Society for



- Medieval Archaeology Monographs 25. Oxbow Monograph 98. Oxford, 1997. Pp. 197-213.
- Girouard, M. *Life in the English Country House: A Social and Architectural History*. London, 1978.
- Godfrey, W. H. *The English Almshouse with Some Account of its Predecessor, the Medieval Hospital*. London, 1955.
- Goering, J. 'The *Summa de penitentia* of Magister Serlo'. *Mediaeval Studies* 38 (1976): 1-55.
- Goering, J. 'The *Summa* of Master Serlo and Thirteenth-Century Penitential Literature'. *Mediaeval Studies* 40 (1978): 290-311.
- Goering, J, and Payer, P. J. 'The *Summa penitentie fratrum predicatorum*: A Thirteenth Century Confessional Formulary'. *Mediaeval Studies* 55 (1933): 1-50.
- Goldberg, P. J. P. 'Women in Fifteenth-Century Town Life'. *Towns and Townspeople in the Fifteenth Century*. Ed. J. A. F. Thompson. Gloucester, 1988. Pp. 107-28.
- Goldberg, P. J. P. 'Fiction in the Archives: The York Cause Papers as a Source for Later Medieval Social History'. *Continuity and Change* 12 (1997): 425-45.
- Goldberg, P. J. P. 'Masters and Men in Later Medieval England'. *Masculinity in Medieval Europe*. Ed. D. M. Hadley. London, 1999. Pp. 56-70.
- Goodich, M. 'Ancilla Dei: The Servant as Saint in the Late Middle Ages'. *Women in the Medieval World: Essays in Honour of J. H. Mundy*. Ed. J. Kirschner and S. Wemple. Oxford, 1987. Pp. 119-36.
- Gottfried, R. S. *Doctors and Medicine in Medieval England 1340-1530*. Princeton, 1986.
- Gransden, A. 'Realistic Observation in Twelfth-Century England'. *Speculum* 46 (1972): 29-51.
- Gray, N. J. 'A Study of *Piers Plowman* in Relation to the Medieval Penitential Tradition'. Unpublished PhD Diss., Cambridge University, 1984.
- Gray, N. 'The Clemency of Cobblers: A Reading of "Glutton's Confession" in *Piers Plowman*'. *Leeds Studies in English*, NS 17 (1986): 61-75.
- Greenstein, J. M. 'The Vision of Peace: Meaning and Representation in Ambrogio Lorenzetti's *Salla della Pace*'. *Art History* 11 (1988): 492-510.



- Gregg, J. Y. 'The Exempla of *Jacob's Well*: A Study in the Transmission of Medieval Sermon Stories'. *Traditio* 33 (1977): 359-80.
- Grenville, J. *Medieval Housing*. London, 1997.
- Gwynn, A. *The English Austin Friars in the Time of Wyclif*. London, 1940.
- Habicht, W. *Die Gebärde in englischen Dichtung des Mittelalters*. Munich, 1959.
- Haines, R. M. 'Education in English Ecclesiastical Legislation of the Later Middle Ages'. *Councils and Assemblies*. Ed. C. J. Cuming and D. Baker. Studies in Church History 7. 1971. Pp. 161-75.
- Hall, A. 'A Brief History of Plant Foods in the City of York: What the Cesspits Tell Us'. *Feeding a City: York. The Provision of Food from Roman Times to the Beginning of the Twentieth Century*. Ed. E. White. Totnes, 2000. Pp. 23-41.
- Hamilton Thompson, A. *The History of the Hospital and the New College of the Annunciation of St Mary in the Newarke, Leicester*. Leicester, 1937.
- Hammond, E. A. 'Physicians in Medieval English Religious Houses'. *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 32 (1958): 105-20.
- Hammond, E. A. 'Incomes of Medieval English Doctors'. *Journal of the History of Medicine* 15 (1960): 154-69.
- Hammond, P. W. *Food and Feast in Medieval England*. Stroud, 1993.
- Hanawalt, B. A. 'Peasant Women's Contribution to the Home Economy in Late Medieval England'. *Women and Work in Pre-Industrial Europe*. Ed. B. A. Hanawalt. Indiana, 1986. Pp. 3-19.
- Hanawalt, B. A. *Growing Up in Medieval London: The Experience of Childhood*. Oxford, 1993.
- Hanawalt, B. A. 'At the Margins of Women's Space in Medieval Europe'. *Matrons and Marginal Women in Medieval Society*. Ed. R. E. Edwards and V. Ziegler. Woodbridge, 1995. Pp. 1-17.
- Hanawalt, B. A. "'The Childe of Bristowe" and the Making of Middle-Class Adolescence'. *Bodies and Disciplines: Intersections of Literature and History in Fifteenth-Century England*. Ed. B. A. Hanawalt and D. Wallace. Medieval Cultures 9. London, 1996). Pp. 155-78.
- Hanawalt, B. A. 'The Host, The Law, and the Ambiguous Space of Medieval London Taverns'. *Medieval Crime and Social Control*. Ed. B. A. Hanawalt and D. Wallace. Medieval Cultures 16. London, 1999. Pp. 204-23.



- Hanna III, R. 'Henry Daniel's *Liber uricrisiarum* (Excerpt)'. *Popular and Practical Science in Medieval England*. East Lansing, 1994. Pp. 185-218.
- Hanna III, R. 'Brewing Trouble: On Literature and History - and Alewives'. *Bodies and Disciplines: Intersections of Literature and History in Fifteenth-Century England*. Ed. B. A. Hanawalt and D. Wallace. Medieval Cultures 9. London, 1996). Pp. 1-17.
- Hanna, [III], R. 'Feasting in Middle English Alliterative Poetry'. *New Perspectives on Middle English Texts: A Festschrift for R. A. Waldron*. Ed. S. Powell and J. J. Smith. Cambridge, 2000. Pp. 31-41.
- Harris, A. L. 'Instructional Poetry for Medieval Children'. *English Studies* 74 (1993): 124-32.
- Harrison, B. *Drink and the Victorians: The Temperance Question in England 1815-1872*. London, 1972.
- Hart, W. H. 'Further Remarks on Some of the Ancient Inns of Southwark'. *Surrey Archaeological Collections* 3 (1865): 193-207.
- Hartley, P. H. S., and Aldrige, H. *Johannes de Mirfield of St Bartholomew's, Smithfield: His Life and Works*. Cambridge, 1936.
- Harvey, B. *Living and Dying in England in England 1100-1540: The Monastic Experience. The Ford Lectures Delivered in the University of Oxford in Hilary Term 1989*. Oxford, 1993.
- Harvey, P. D. A., and McGuinness. *A Guide to British Medieval Seals*. London, 1996.
- Hazelton, R. 'Chaucer's Parson's Tale and the *Moralium dogma philosophorum*'. *Traditio* 16 (1960): 256-74.
- Heal, F. *Hospitality in Early Modern England*. Oxford, 1990.
- Heal, F. 'Reciprocity and Exchange in the Late Medieval Household'. *Bodies and Disciplines: Intersections of Literature and History in Fifteenth-Century England*. Ed. B. A. Hanawalt and D. Wallace. Medieval Cultures 9. London, 1996. Pp. 179-98.
- Heffernan, T. J. 'Sermon Literature'. *Middle English Prose: A Critical Guide to Major Authors and Genres*. Ed. A. S. G. Edwards. New Brunswick, N. J., 1984. Pp. 177-207.
- Henisch, B. A. *Fast and Feast: Food in Medieval Society*. London, 1976.
- Henisch, B. A. *The Medieval Calendar Year*. Pennsylvania, 1999.



- Herbert, W. *The History of the Twelve Great Livery Companies of London: Principally Collected from Their Grants and Records*. Vol. 2. London, 1834.
- Hillier, B., and Hanson, J. *The Social Logic of Space*. Cambridge, 1984.
- Hieatt, C. B. 'A Cook of 14<sup>th</sup>-Century London: Chaucer's Hogge of Ware'. *Cooks and Other People: Proceedings of the Oxford Symposium on Food and Cookery*. Ed. H. Walker. Totnes, 1996. Pp. 138-43.
- Hodgson, P. 'Ignorancia sacerdotum: A Fifteenth-Century Discourse on the Lambeth Constitutions'. *Review of English Studies* 24 (1948): 1-11.
- Holt, R., and Rosser, G. *The Medieval Town: A Reader in English Urban History, 1200-1540*. London, 1990.
- Horner, P. J. 'Preachers at Paul's Cross: Religion, Society and Politics in Late Medieval England'. *Medieval Sermons and Society: Cloister, City, University*. Ed. J. Hamesse et al. Louvain-La-Neuve, 1998. Pp. 261-82.
- Howard, D. R. *The Three Temptations: Medieval Man in Search of the World*. Princeton, 1966.
- Hudson, A. 'A New Look at the *Lay Folks' Catechism*'. *Viator* 16 (1985): 243-58.
- Hughes, J. 'The Administration of Confession in the Diocese of York in the Fourteenth Century'. *Studies in Clergy and Ministry in Medieval England: Purvis Seminar Studies*. Ed. D. M. Smith. Borthwick Studies in History 1. York, 1991. Pp. 87-163.
- Hyde, J. K. *Society and Politics in Medieval Italy: The Evolution of the Civil Life, 1000-1350*. London, 1973.
- Hyde, J. K. 'Medieval Descriptions of Cities'. *Literacy and Its Uses: Studies in Late Medieval Italy*. Ed. D. Waley. Manchester, 1993. Pp. 1-27.
- James, M. 'Ritual, Drama and Social Body in the Late Medieval Town'. *Past and Present* 98 (1983): 1-29.
- James, M. R. *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Library of Gonville and Caius College*. Vol. 1. Cambridge, 1907.
- James, M. R. 'The Catalogue of the Library of the Augustinian Friars at York: Now First Edited from the Manuscript at Trinity College Dublin'. *Fasciculus Joanni Willis clark dicatus*. Cambridge, 1909.
- Jansen-Sieben, R. 'From Food Therapy to Cookery-Book'. *Medieval Dutch Literature in its European Context*. Ed. E. Kooper. Cambridge, 1994. Pp. 261-79.



- Johnson, M. *An Archaeology of Capitalism*. Oxford, 1996.
- Jonassen, F. B. 'Carnival Food Imagery in Chaucer's Description of the Franklin'. *Studies in the Age of Chaucer* 16 (1994): 99-117.
- Jones, P. *The Italian City-State: From Commune to Signoria*. Oxford, 1997.
- Jones, P. E. *The Worshipful Company of Poulterers of the City of London: A Short History*. London, 1965.
- Jones, P. E. *The Butchers of London: A History of the Worshipful Company of Butchers of the City of London*. London, 1976.
- Jones, P. M. 'Harley MS 2558: A Fifteenth Century Medical Commonplace Book'. *Manuscript Sources of Medieval Medicine: A Book of Essays*. Ed. M. R. Schleissner. London, 1995. Pp. 35-54.
- Jones, P. M. 'Thomas Fayreford: An English Fifteenth Century Medical Practitioner'. *Medicine from the Black Death to the French Disease*. Ed. R. French *et al.* Aldershot, 1998. Pp. 156-83.
- Jones, W. R. 'Franciscan Education and Monastic Libraries: Some Documents'. *Traditio* 30 (1974): 435-45.
- Justice, S. *Writing and Rebellion: England in 1381*. London, 1994.
- Kaske, R. E. 'The Character of Hunger in *Piers Plowman*'. *Medieval English Studies*. Ed. E. D. Kennedy *et al.* Woodbridge, 1988. Pp. 187-97.
- Katzenellenbogen, A. *Allegories of the Virtues and Vices in Medieval Art from Early Christian Times to the Thirteenth Century*. London, 1939.
- Keene, D. 'Medieval London and Its Region'. *London Journal*. 15 (1989): 99-111.
- Keene, D. 'Shops and Shopping in Medieval London'. *Medieval Art, Architecture and Archaeology in London*. Ed. L. Grant. The British Archaeological Association Conference Transactions 10. London, 1990. Pp. 29-46.
- Keene, D. 'London from the Post-Roman Period to 1300'. *The Cambridge Urban History of Britain: Vol. 1. 600-1540*. Ed. D. M. Palliser. Cambridge, 2000. Pp. 187-216.
- Keiser, E. B. 'The Festive Decorum of *Cleanness*'. *Chivalric Literature: Essays on the Relations Between Literature and Life in the Later Middle Ages*. Ed. L. D. Benson and J. Leyerle. Kalamazoo, 1980. Pp. 63-75.
- Keiser, G. R. "'Nought How Lang Man Lif; Bot How Wele": The Laity and the Ladder of Perfection'. *De cella in seculum: Religious and Secular Devotion in Late*



- Medieval England. An Interdisciplinary Conference in Celebration of the Eighth Centenary of the Consecration of St Hugh of Avalon Bishop of Lincoln, 20-22 July, 1986.* Ed. M. G. Sargent. Cambridge, 1989. Pp. 145-59.
- Kent, S. 'Activity Areas and Architecture: An Interdisciplinary Study of the Relationship Between the Use of Space and Domestic Built Environments'. *Domestic Architecture and the Use of Space*. Ed. S. Kent. Cambridge, 1990. Pp. 1-8.
- Ker, N. R. 'Liber Custumarum, and Other Manuscripts Formerly at the Guildhall'. *Guildhall Miscellany* 3 (1954): 37-45.
- Ker, N. R. *Medieval Manuscripts in British Libraries. Volume 1: London*. Oxford, 1969.
- Ker, N. R., and Piper, J. *Medieval Manuscripts in British Libraries IV: Paisley-York*. Oxford, 1992.
- Kienzle, B. M., et al., eds. *Models of Holiness in Medieval Sermons: Proceedings of the International Symposium (Kalamazoo, 4-7 May 1995)*. Textes et Études du Moyen Âge 5. Louvain-La-Neuve, 1996.
- Kienzle, B. M., ed. *The Sermon*. Typologie des Sources du Moyen Âge Occidental vols. 81-83. Turnhout, 2000.
- Kingsford, C. L. 'A London Merchant's House and Its Owners, 1360-1614'. *Archaeologia*, second series 24 (1923-24): 137-58.
- Kipling, G. 'Richard II's "Sumptuous Pageants" and the Idea of Civic Triumph'. *Pageantry in the Shakespearean Theater*. Ed. D. M. Bergeron. Athens, 1985. Pp. 83-103.
- Kipling, G. *Enter the King: Theatre, Liturgy, and Ritual in Medieval Civic Triumph*. Oxford, 1998.
- Kleineke, H. 'William FitzStephen's "Description of London": A New Edition'. Unpublished MA Diss., Royal Holloway College, London University, 1994.
- Kleineke, H. 'Carleton's Book: William FitzStephen's "Description of London" in a Late Fourteenth-Century Common-Place Book'. *Historical Research* 74 (2001): 117-26.
- Kowaleski, M. *Local Markets and Regional Trade in Medieval Exeter*. Cambridge, 1995.



- Kristeller, P. O. 'The School of Salerno: Its Development and Its Contribution to the History of Learning'. *Studies in Renaissance Thought and Letters*. Storia e Letteratura Raccolta di Studi e Testi 54. Rome, 1969. Pp. 495-51.
- Kuhn, S. M., ed. *Middle English Dictionary*. Vol. 6. Ann Arbor, n.d.
- Kuhn, S. M., and Reidy, J., eds. *Middle English Dictionary*. Vol. 4. Ann Arbor, 1963.
- Kuhn, S. M., and Reidy, J., eds. *Middle English Dictionary*. Vol. 5. Ann Arbor, 1975.
- Kurath, H., and Kuhn, S. M., eds. *Middle English Dictionary*. Vol. 2. Ann Arbor, 1959.
- Laing, M. *Catalogue of Sources for a Linguistic Atlas of Early Medieval English*. Cambridge, 1993.
- Laing, M. 'A Fourteenth-Century Sermon on the Number Seven in Merton College, Oxford MS 248'. *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen* 98 (1997): 99-129
- Lambert, M. *Medieval Heresy: Popular Movements from the Gregorian Reform to the Reformation*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. Oxford, 1992.
- Latham, R. E. *Revised Latin Word-List: From British and Irish Sources with Supplement*. London, 1999.
- Lawton, D. A. 'Gaytrge's Sermon, *Dictamen*, and Middle English Verse'. *Modern Philology* 76 (1979): 329-43.
- Leader D. R. *A History of the University of Cambridge. Volume 1: The University to 1546*. Cambridge, 1988.
- Leech, R. H. 'The Symbolic Hall: Historical Context and Merchant Culture in the early Modern City'. *Vernacular Architecture* 31 (2000): 1-10.
- Lewis, R. E. *Middle English Dictionary*. Vol. 13. Ann Arbor, 2000.
- Lindenbaum, S. 'London Texts and Literate Practices'. *The Cambridge History of Medieval Literature*. Oxford, 1999. Pp. 284-309.
- Lindenbaum, S. 'Ceremony and Oligarchy: The London Midsummer Watch'. *City and Spectacle in Medieval Europe*. Ed. B. A. Hanawalt and K. L. Reyerson. Medieval Studies at Minnesota 6. London, 1994. Pp. 171-88.
- Lipson, E. *An Introduction to the Economic History of England. Volume I: The Middle Ages*. London, 1915.
- Little, L. K. 'Pride Goes Before Avarice: Social Change and the Vices in Latin Christendom'. *American Historical Review* 76 (1971): 16-59.



- Locock, M. 'Meaningful Architecture'. *Meaningful Architecture: Social Interpretation of Buildings*. Ed. M. Locock. World Archaeology Series 9. Aldershot, 1994. Pp. 1-13.
- Long, J. 'Mysticism and Hysteria: The Histories of Margery Kempe and Anna O.'. *Feminist Readings in Middle English Literature: The Wife of Bath and All Her Sect*. Ed. R. Evans and L. Johnson. London, 1994. Pp. 88-111.
- Lonie, I. M. 'A Structural Pattern in Greek Dietetics and the Early History of Greek Medicine'. *Medical History* 21 (1977): 235-60.
- Lopez, R. S., and Raymond, I. W. *Medieval Trade in the Mediterranean World*. London, 1955.
- MacCracken, H. N. 'King Henry's Triumphal Entry into London, Lydgate's Poem, and Carpenter's Letter'. *Archiv für das Studium der neuern Sprachen und Literaturen* 126 (1911): 75-102.
- McLaren, M.-R. 'The Textual Transmission of the London Chronicles'. *English Manuscript Studies 1100-1700* 3 (1992): 38-72.
- McLaren, M.-R. 'The Aims and Interests of the London Chroniclers of the Fifteenth Century'. *Trade, Devotion and Governance: Papers in Later Medieval History*. Ed. D. J. Clayton, R. G. Davies, and P. McNiven. Stroud, 1994. Pp. 158-76.
- McNeill, J. T. 'Medicine for Sin as Prescribed in the Penitentials'. *Church History* 1 (1932): 14-26.
- McNeill, J. T., and Gamer, H. M. *Medieval Handbooks of Penance*. New York, 1938.
- McRae, B. R. 'Charity and Gild Solidarity in Late Medieval England'. *Journal of British Studies* 32 (1993): 195-225.
- McRae, B. R. 'Unity or Division? The Social Meaning of the Guild Ceremony'. *City and Spectacle in Medieval Europe*. Ed. B. A. Hanawalt and K. L. Reyerson. Medieval Studies at Minnesota 6. London, 1994. Pp. 189-207.
- Madan, F., and Craster, H. H. E. *A Summary Catalogue of Western Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library at Oxford: Vol. II. Part I*. Oxford, 1922.
- Mallet, C. E. *A History of the University of Oxford. Volume 1: The Medieval University*. London, 1924.
- Mann, J. 'Eating and Drinking in *Piers Plowman*'. *Essays and Studies* 32 (1979): 26-42.



- Martyn, E. *Everyday Etiquette: A Comprehensive Guide to Common Courtesies, How to be a Perfect guest, Entertaining, plus, How to Cope with Formal Occasions*. London, 1989.
- Masschaele, J. 'The Public Space of the Marketplace in Medieval England'. *Speculum* 77 (2002): 383-421.
- Mazzini, I. 'Diet and Medicine in the Ancient World'. *Food: A Culinary History from Antiquity to the Present*. Ed. J.-L. Flandrin and M. Montanari. New York, 1999. Pp. 141-52.
- Mazzotta, G. *Dante, Poet of the Desert: History and Allegory in the Divine Comedy*. Princeton, 1979.
- Meale, C. M. 'The Compiler at Work: John Colyns and BL MS Harley 2252'. *Manuscripts and Readers in Fifteenth Century England: The Literary Implications of Manuscript Study. Essays from the 1981 Conference at the University of York*. Cambridge, 1983. Pp. 82-103.
- Meale, C. M. 'The Libelle of Englyshe Polycye and Mercantile Literary Culture in Late-Medieval London'. *London and Europe in the Later Middle Ages*. Ed. J. Boffey and P. King. Westfield Publications in Medieval Studies 9. London, 1995. Pp. 181-227.
- Meder, T. 'Boek van zeden: Three Medieval Flemish Courtesy Poems in the Latin Facetus Tradition'. *Literary Aspects of Courtly Culture: Selected Papers from the Seventh Triennial Congress of the International Courtly Literature Society University of Massachusetts, Amherst, USA, 27 July-1 August 1992*. Ed. D. Maddox and S. Sturm-Maddox. Cambridge, 1994. Pp. 333-41.
- Meech, S. B. 'John Drury and His English Writings (Camb. Add. Man. 2830)'. *Speculum* 9 (1934): 70-83.
- Mennell, S. *All Manners of Food: Eating and Taste in England and France from the Middle Ages to the Present*. Oxford, 1985.
- Mennell, S. 'On the Civilizing of Appetite'. *Theory, Culture and Society* 4 (1987): 373-403.
- Mertes, R. G. K. A. 'The Household as a Religious Community'. *The Later Middle Ages*. Ed. J. Rosenthal and C. Richmond. New York, 1987. Pp. 123-39.
- Meyer, P. 'La manière de langage qui enseigne a parler et écrire le français'. *Revue critique d'histoire et de littérature* 5 (1870): 373-405.



- Meyer, P. 'Les manuscrits français de Cambridge: III Trinity College'. *Romania* 32 (1903): 18-120.
- Meyers, A. R. 'The Wealth of Richard Lyons'. *Essays in Medieval History Presented to Bertie Wilson*. Ed. T. A. Sandquist and M. R. Powicke. Toronto, 1969. Pp. 301-29.
- Miller, W. I. 'Gluttony'. *Representations* 60 (1997): 92-112.
- Milner, S. 'Flesh and Food: The Function of Female Asceticism in the Digby *Mary Magdalene*'. *Philological Quarterly* 73 (1994): 385-401.
- Mintz, S. W. *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History*. New York, 1985.
- Moisa, M. 'Debate: Conviviality and Charity in Medieval and Early Modern England'. *Past and Present* 154 (1997): 223-34.
- Monckton, H. A. *A History of the English Public House*. London, 1969.
- Mooney, L. R. 'A Middle English Verse Compendium of Astrological Medicine'. *Medical History* 28 (1984): 406-19.
- Munby, J., *et al.* 'Zacharia's: A Fourteenth-Century Oxford New Inn and the Origins of the Medieval Urban Inn'. *Oxoniensia* 57 (1992): 245-309.
- Murphy, J. J. 'Introduction'. *Three Medieval Rhetorical Arts*. Ed. J. J. Murphy. London, 1971. Pp. vii-xxiii.
- Murphy, M. 'Feeding Medieval Cities: Some Historical Approaches'. *Food and Eating in Medieval Europe*. Ed. M. Carlin and J. T. Rosenthal. London, 1998. Pp. 117-31.
- Murray, A. 'Counselling in Medieval Confession'. *Handling Sin: Confession in the Middle Ages*. Ed. P. Biller and A. J. Minnis. York Studies in Medieval Theology 2. Woodbridge, 1998. Pp. 63-77.
- Mustain, J. K. 'A Rural Medical Practitioner in Fifteenth-Century England'. *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 46 (1972): 469-76.
- Neibyl, P. H. 'The Non-Naturals'. *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 45 (1971): 486-92.
- Newhauser, R. *The Early History of Greed: The Sin of Avarice in Early Medieval Thought and Literature*. Cambridge, 2000.
- Nicholls, J. *The Matter of Courtesy: Medieval Courtesy Books and the Gawain Poet*. Woodbridge, 1985.



- Nichols, Jr., R. E. 'The Pardoner's Cakes and Ale'. *P.M.L.A.* 82 (1967): 498-504.
- Nightingale, P. *A Medieval Mercantile Community: The Grocers' Company and the Politics and Trade of London 1000-1485*. London, 1995.
- Nolcken, C. V. 'Some Alphabetical Compendia and How Preachers Used Them in Fourteenth-Century England'. *Viator* 12 (1981): 271-88.
- Norman, D. "'Love Justice, You Who Judge the Earth": The Paintings of the Sala dei Nove in the Palazzo Pubblico, Siena'. *Siena, Florence and Padua: Art Society and Religion 1280-1400. Vol. II: Case Studies*. London, 1995. Pp. 145-67.
- Norman, D. "'The Glorious Deeds of the Commune": Civic Patronage of Art'. *Siena, Florence and Padua: Art Society and Religion 1280-1400. Volume I: Interpretative Essays*. Ed. D. Norman. London, 1995. Pp. 133-53.
- Norman, D., ed. *Siena, Florence and Padua: Art Society and Religion 1280-1400*. 2 vols. London, 1995.
- Norman, J. S. *Metamorphoses of an Allegory: The Iconography of the Psychomachia in Medieval Art*. Paris, 1988.
- Norman, J. S. 'The Illustrated *Etymachia*: A New Resource for the Hard-Pressed Medieval Preacher'. *Medieval Sermon Studies* 38 (1996): 46-55.
- Norman, P. 'The Tabard Inn, Southwark, The Queen's Head, William Rutter, and St Margaret's Church'. *Surrey Archaeological Collections* 13 (1897): 28-38.
- Nutton, V. 'The Seeds of Disease: An Explanation of Contagion and Infection from the Greeks to the Renaissance'. *Medical History* 27 (1983): 1-34.
- Nutton, V. 'Medicine in the Greek World, 800-50 BC'. *The Western Medical Tradition: 800 BC to AD 1800*. Ed. L. I. Conrad *et al.* Cambridge, 1995. Pp. 11-38.
- Nutton, V. 'Medicine in Medieval Western Europe, 100-1500'. *The Western Medical Tradition: 800 BC to AD 1800*. Ed. L. I. Conrad *et al.* Cambridge, 1995. Pp. 139-205.
- O'Brien, D. J. S. "'The Veray Registre of all Trouthe": The Content, Function, and Character of Civic Registers of London and York, c. 1274-c. 1482'. Unpublished PhD Diss., York University, 1999.
- O'Connor, T. 'Bones as Evidence of Meat Production and Distribution in York'. *Feeding a City: York. The Provision of Food from Roman Times to the Beginning of the Twentieth Century*. Ed. E. White. Totnes, 2000. Pp. 43-60.



- O'Donoghue, E. G. O. *The Story of Bethlehem Hospital from its Foundation in 1247*. London, 1914.
- Orme, N. *Medieval Children*. London, 2001.
- Orme, N. and M. Webster. *The English Hospital 1070-1570*. London, 1995.
- Osberg, R. 'The Jesse Tree in the 1432 London Entry of Henry VI: Messianic Kingship and the Rule of Justice'. *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 16 (1986): 213-32.
- Owst, G. R. *Preaching in Medieval England: A New Introduction to Sermon Manuscripts of the Period c. 1350-1450*. Cambridge, 1926.
- Owst, G. R. *Literature and the Pulpit: Neglected Chapter in the History of English Letters and the English People*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. Oxford, 1961.
- Palliser, D. M. 'Introduction'. *The Cambridge Urban History of Britain: Volume I. 600-1540*. Ed. D. M. Palliser. Cambridge, 2000. Pp. 3-15.
- Pantin, W. A. 'Medieval Inns'. *Studies in Building History: Essays in Recognition of the Work of B. H. St. J. O'Neil*. Ed. E. M. Jope. London, 1961. Pp. 166-91.
- Pantin, W. A. 'Medieval English Town-House Plans'. *Medieval Archaeology* 6-7 (1962-63): 202-39.
- Pantin, W. A. 'Some Medieval English Town Houses: A Study in Adaptation'. *Culture and Environment: Essays in Honour of Cyril Fox*. Ed. I. LL. Foster and L. Alcock. London, 1963. Pp. 445-78.
- Pantin, W. A. 'Instructions for a Devout and Literate Layman'. *Medieval Learning and Literature: Essays Presented to Richard William Hunt*. Ed. J. J. G. Alexander and M. T. Gibson. Oxford, 1976. Pp. 398-422.
- Park, K. 'Medicine and Society in Medieval Europe, 500-1500'. *Medicine in Society: Historical Essays*. Ed. A. Wear. Cambridge, 1993. Pp. 59-90.
- Paster, G. K. *The Body Embarrassed: Drama and the Discipline of Shame in Early Modern England*. New York, 1993.
- Pearsall, D. *John Lydgate*. London, 1970.
- Pearsall, D. 'Poverty and Poor People in *Piers Plowman*'. *Medieval English Studies Presented to George Kane*. Ed. E. D. Kennedy, R. Waldron, and J. S. Wittig. Woodbridge, 1988. Pp. 167-85.
- Pedersen, F. '*Romeo and Juliet of Stonegate*': *A Medieval Marriage in Crisis*. Borthwick Papers 87. York, 1995.



- Pelling, M. 'Occupational Diversity: Barbersurgeons and the Trade of Norwich, 1550-1640'. *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 5 (1982): 484-511.
- Pelling, M. 'Medical Practice in Early Modern England: Trade or Profession?'. *The Professions in Early Modern England*. Ed. W. Prest. London, 1987. Pp. 90-128.
- Pelling, M. and Webster, C. 'Medical Practitioners'. *Health, Medicine and Mortality in the Sixteenth Century*. Ed. C. Webster. Cambridge, 1979. Pp. 165-235.
- Pfander, H. G. 'Some Medieval Manuals of Religious Instructions in England and Observations on Chaucer's Parson's Tale'. *Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 35 (1936): 243-58.
- Phillips, K. 'Bodily walls, Windows, and Doors: The Politics of Gesture in Late Fifteenth-Century Books for Women'. *Medieval Women: Texts and Contexts in Late Medieval Britain. Essays for Felicity Riddy*. Ed. J. Wogan-Browne et al. Medieval Women: Texts and Contexts 3. Turnhout, 2000. Pp. 185-98.
- Pickett, P. 'A Translation of the "Canutus" Plague Treatise'. *Popular and Practical Science of Medieval England*. Ed. L. M. Matherson. East Lansing, 1994. Pp. 263-82.
- Pleij, H. *Dreaming of Cockaigne: Medieval Fantasies of the Perfect Life*. Trans. D. Webb. New York, 2001.
- Porter, R. 'The Language of Quackery in England, 1660-1800'. *The Social History of Language*. Ed. P. Burke and R. Porter. Cambridge Studies in Oral and Literate Culture 12. Cambridge, 1987. Pp. 73-103.
- Portman, D. 'Vernacular Buildings in the Oxford Region in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries'. *Rural Change and Urban Growth, 1500-1800: Essays in English Regional History in Honour of W. G. Hoskins*. Ed. C. W. Chalkin and M. A. Havinden. London, 1972. Pp. 135-68.
- Powell, S. 'The Transmission and Circulation of the *Lay Folks' Catechism*'. *Late Medieval Religious Texts and Their Transmission: Essays in Honour of A. I. Doyle*. Ed. A. J. Minnis. Cambridge, 1994. Pp. 67-84.
- Power, E., and Postan, M. M. *Studies in English Trade in the Fifteenth Century*. London, 1933.
- Prescott, E. *The English Medieval Hospital c. 1050-1640*. London, 1992.
- Priestly, U., Corfield, P. J., and Sutermeister, H. 'Rooms and Room Use in Norwich Housing, 1580-1730'. *Post-Medieval Archaeology* 16 (1982): 93-123.



- Rapoport, A. 'Systems of Activities and Systems of Settings'. *Domestic Architecture and the Use of Space*. Ed. S. Kent. Cambridge, 1990. Pp. 9-20.
- Rather, L. J. 'The "Six Things Non-Natural": A Note on the Origins and the Fate of a Doctrine and a Phrase'. *Clio medica* 3 (1968): 337-47.
- Rawcliffe, C. 'The Hospitals of Later Medieval London'. *Medical History* 28 (1984): 1-21.
- Rawcliffe, C. 'The Profits of Practice: The Wealth and Status of Medical Men in Later Medieval England'. *Social History of Medicine* 1 (1988): 61-78.
- Rawcliffe, C. 'Hospital Nurses and Their Work'. *Daily Life in the Late Middle Ages*. Ed. R. Britnell. Stroud, 1998. Pp. 43-64.
- Rawcliffe, C. *Medicine and Society in Later Medieval England*. London, 1999.
- Rawcliffe, C. *Medicine for the Soul: The Life, Death and Resurrection of an English Medieval Hospital, St Giles's Norwich, c. 1249-1550*. Stroud, 1999.
- Raymo, R. R. 'Works of Religious and Philosophical Instruction'. *A Manual of Writings in Middle English 1050-1500*. Ed. A. E. Hartung. Vol. 7. Connecticut, 1986. Pp. 2467-2588.
- Rees Jones, S. "'A peler of Holy Church": Margery Kempe and the Bishops'. *Medieval Women: Texts and Contexts in Late Medieval Britain. Essays for Felicity Riddy*. Ed. J. Wogan-Browne *et al.* Medieval Women: Texts and Contexts 3. Turnhout, 2000. Pp. 377-91.
- Rees Jones, S. 'Household, Work and the Problem of Mobile Labour: The Regulation of Labour in Medieval English Towns'. *The Problems of Labour in Fourteenth-Century England*. Ed. J. Bothwell, P. J. P. Goldberg, and W. M. Ormrod. Woodbridge, 2000. Pp. 133-53.
- Rees Jones, S. 'The Household in English Urban Government in the Later Middle Ages'. *The Household in Later Medieval Cities: Italy and Northwestern Europe Compared. Proceedings of the International Conference Ghent, 21<sup>st</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> January 2000*. Ed. M. Carlier and T. Soens. Studies in Urban Social, Economie [sic] and Political History of the Medieval and Early Modern Low Countries 12. Louvain, 2001. 71-87.
- Rees Jones, S. 'Thomas More's *Utopia* and Medieval London'. *Pragmatic Utopias: Ideals and Communities, 1200-1630*. Ed. R. Horrox and S. Rees Jones. Cambridge, 2001. Pp. 117-35.



- Renoir, A., and Benson, C. D. 'John Lydgate'. *A Manual of the Writings in Middle English 1050-1500*. Ed. A. E. Hartung. Vol. 6. New Haven, 1980. Pp. 1809-1920, 2071-2175.
- Reyerson, K. L. 'Commercial Fraud in the Middle Ages: The Case of the Dissembling Pepperer'. *Journal of Medieval History* 8 (1982): 63-73.
- Reynolds, P. L. *Food and the Body: Some Peculiar Questions in High Medieval Theology*. Studien und Texte zur Geistesgeschichte des Mittelalters 69. Leiden, 1999.
- Reynolds, S. 'Medieval Urban History and the History of Political Thought'. *Urban History Yearbook* 9 (1982): 14-23.
- Reynolds, S. 'The Writing of Medieval Urban History in England'. *Theoretische Geschichte* 19 (1992): 43-57.
- Richards, P. *The Medieval Leper and his Northern Heirs*. Cambridge, 1977.
- Richmond, C. 'The Pastons and London'. *Courts and Regions in Medieval Europe*. Ed. S. Rees-Jones, R. Marks, and A. J. Minnis. Woodbridge, 2000. Pp. 211-26.
- Riddle, J. M. 'Theory and Practice in Medieval Medicine'. *Viator* 5 (1974): 157-84.
- Riddy F. 'Mother Knows Best: Reading Social Change in a Courtesy Text'. *Speculum* 71 (1996): 66-86.
- Riddy, F. 'Looking Closely: Authority and Intimacy in the Late-Medieval Urban Home'. *Gendering the Master Narrative*. Ed. M. Erler and M. Kowaleski. Ithaca, forthcoming.
- Robbins, R. H. 'Medical Manuscripts in Middle English'. *Speculum* 45 (1970): 393-415.
- Roberts, P. B. 'Medieval University Preaching: The Evidence of the Statutes'. *Medieval Sermons and Society: Cloister, City, University*. Ed. J. Hamesse et al. Louvain-La-Neuve, 1998. Pp. 317-28.
- Roberts, P. B. 'Preaching and/ in the Medieval City'. *Medieval Sermons and Society: Cloister, City, University*. Ed. J. Hamesse et al. Louvain-La-Neuve, 1998. Pp. 151-64.
- Robertson, Jr., D. W. 'The Cultural Tradition of *Handlyng Synne*'. *Speculum* 22 (1947): 162-85.
- Robertson, Jr., D. W. 'Frequency of Preaching in Thirteenth-Century England'. *Speculum* 24 (1949): 376-88.



- Röhrkasten, J. 'London and London Mendicants in the Late Middle Ages'. *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 47 (1996): 446-77.
- Röhrkasten, J. 'Mendicants in the Metropolis: The Londoners and the Development of the London Friaries'. *Thirteenth Century England VI: Proceedings of the Durham Conference 1995*. Ed. R. H. Britnell and R. Fame. Woodbridge, 1997. Pp. 61-75.
- Roney, L. 'Winner and Waster's "Wyse Wordes": Teaching Economics in Fourteenth-Century England'. *Speculum* 69 (1994): 1070-1100.
- Ross, A. C. 'The Assize of Bread', *Economic History Review*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Series 9 (1956): 332-42.
- Rosser, G. *Medieval Westminster, 1200-1540*. Oxford, 1989.
- Rosser, G. 'Going to the Fraternity Feast: Commensality and Social Relations in Late Medieval England'. *Journal of British Studies* 33 (1994): 430-46.
- Rosser, G. 'Myth, Image and Social Process in the English Medieval Town'. *Urban History* 23 (1996): 5-25.
- Rosser, G. 'Crafts, Guilds and the Negotiation of Work in the Medieval Town'. *Past and Present* 154 (1997): 3-31.
- Rossum, G. D. V. *History of the Hour: Clocks and Modern Temporal Orders*. Trans. T. Dunlap. London, 1996.
- Rouse, R. H., and Rouse, M. A. *Preachers, Florilegia and Sermons: Studies in the Manipulus florum of Thomas of Ireland*. Toronto, 1979.
- Rubin, M. *Charity and Community in Medieval Cambridge*. Cambridge, 1987.
- Rubin, M. *Corpus Christi: The Eucharist in Late Medieval Culture*. Cambridge, 1991.
- Russell, G. H. 'Vernacular Instruction of the Laity in the Later Middle Ages in England: Some Texts and Notes'. *Journal of Religious History* 2 (1962): 98-119.
- Rycraft, A. "'Messing About in Boats": The York Chamberlains' Accounts, 1444-5'. *Food on the Move: Proceedings of the Oxford Symposium on Food and cookery 1996*. Ed. H. Walker. Totnes, 1996. Pp. 258-64.
- Rycraft, A. 'Can We Tell What People Ate in Late Medieval York?'. *Feeding a City: York. The Provision of Food from Roman Times to the Beginning of the Twentieth Century*. Ed. E. White. Totnes, 2000. Pp. 61-78.
- Sabine, E. L. 'Butchering in Medieval London'. *Speculum* 8 (1933): 335-353.



- Salter, E. 'The Timeliness of *Wynnere and Wastoure*'. *Medium Aevum* 47 (1978): 40-65.
- Salzman, L. F. *English Trade in the Middle Ages*. Oxford, 1931.
- Samuel, M. 'The Fifteenth-Century Garner at Leadenhall, London'. *Antiquaries Journal* 69 (1989): 119-53.
- Samuel, M., and Milne, G. 'The "Ledene Hall and Medieval Market: Medieval and Modern Leadenhall 1195-1990'. *From Roman Basilica to Medieval Market: Archaeology in Action in the City of London*. Ed. G. Milne. London, 1992. Pp. 39-50.
- Sandon, E. *Suffolk Houses: A Study in Domestic Architecture*. Woodbridge, 1977.
- Santich, B. "'Nondescript Gallimaufries" or Sophisticated Spicings? A Revaluation of Medieval Cuisine'. *Petit propos culinaires* 51 (1995): 15-26.
- Saunders, H. W., ed. *An Introduction to the Obedientiary and Manor Rolls of Norwich Cathedral Priory*. Norwich, 1930.
- Sen, A. *Poverty and Famine: An Essay on Entitlement and Deprivation*. Oxford, 1981.
- Scase, W. 'Reginal Pecock, John Carpenter and John Colop's "Common-Profit" Books: Aspects of Book Ownership and Circulation in Fifteenth-Century London'. *Medium aevum* 61 (1992): 261-74.
- Scattergood, J. 'Misrepresenting the City: Genre, Intertextuality and William FitzStephen's *Description of London* (c. 1173)'. *London and Europe in the Later Middle Ages*. Ed. J. Boffey and P. King. Westfield Publications in Medieval Studies 9. London, 1995. Pp. 1-34.
- Scattergood, J. 'Winner and Waster and the Mid-Fourteenth Century Economy'. *The Lost Tradition: Essays on Middle English Alliterative Poetry*. Dublin, 2000. Pp. 69-85.
- Schmitt, J.-C. 'The Rationale of Gestures in the West: Third to Thirteenth Centuries'. *A Cultural History of Gesture: From Antiquity to the Present Day*. Ed. J. Bremmer and H. Roodenberg. Cambridge, 1991. Pp. 59-70.
- Schofield, J. *The Building of London: From the Conquest to the Great Fire*. Revised edn. London, 1993.
- Schofield, J. 'Social Perceptions of Space in Medieval and Tudor London Houses'. *Meaningful Architecture: Social Interpretations of Buildings*. Ed. M. Locock. Aldershot, 1994. Pp. 188-206.



- Schofield, J. *Medieval London Houses*. London, 1994.
- Schofield, J. 'Urban Housing in England, 1400-1600'. *The Age of Transition: The Archaeology of English Culture 1400-1600. Proceedings of a Conference Hosted By the Society for Medieval Archaeology and the Society for Post-Medieval Archaeology at the British Museum, London, 14-15<sup>th</sup> November 1996*. Ed. D. Gaimster and P. Stamper. Society for Medieval Archaeology Monograph 15. Oxbow Monograph 98. Oxford, 1997. Pp. 127-44.
- Schofield, J, and Vince, A. *Medieval Towns*. London, 1994.
- Scully, T. *The Art of Cookery in the Middle Ages*. Woodbridge, 1995.
- Scully, T. 'The *Opusculum de saporibus* of Magnus Mediolanensis'. *Medium aevum* 54 (1985): 178-207.
- Scully, T. 'The Sickdish in Early French Recipe Collections'. *Health, Disease and Healing in Medieval Culture*. Ed. S. Campbell *et al.* London, 1992. Pp. 132-140.
- Sen, A. *Poverty and Famine: An Essay on Entitlement and Deprivation*. Oxford, 1981.
- Seymour, M. A. 'The Organisation, Personnel and Functions of the Medieval Hospital in the Later Middle Ages. Unpublished MA Diss, London University, 1947.
- Simpson, J. *Piers Plowman: An Introduction to the B-Text*. London, 1990.
- Simpson, J. "'After Craftes Conseil clotheth yow and fede": Langland and London City Politics'. *England in the Fourteenth Century: Proceedings of the 1991 Harlaxton Symposium*. Ed. N. Rogers. Harlaxton Medieval Studies 3. Stamford, 1993. Pp. 109-27.
- Simpson, J. 'Violence, Narrative and Proper Name: *Sir Degaré*, "The Tale of Sir Gareth of Orkney" and the *Folie Tristan d'Oxford*'. *The Spirit of Popular Romance*. Ed. A. Putter and J. Gilbert. London, 2000. Pp. 122-41.
- Singer, D. W. 'Some Plague Tractates (Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries)'. *Proceedings of the Royal Society of Medicine* 9 (1916): 159-212.
- Siraisi, N. G. *Medieval and Early Renaissance Medicine: An Introduction to Knowledge and Practice*. London, 1990.
- Skinner, Q. 'Ambrogio Lorenzetti: The Artist as Political Philosopher'. *Proceedings of the British Academy* 72 (1986): 1-56.
- Slack, P. 'Mirrors of Health and Treasures of Poor Men: The Uses of the Vernacular Medical Literature of Tudor England'. *Health, Medicine and Mortality in the Sixteenth Century*. Ed. C. Webster. Cambridge, 1979. Pp. 237-73.



- Spencer, H. L. *English Preaching in the Later Middle Ages*. Oxford, 1993.
- Sponsler, C. *Drama and Resistance: Bodies, Goods, and Theatricality in Late Medieval England*. Medieval Cultures 10. London, 1997.
- Sponsler, C. 'Eating Lessons: Lydgate's "Dietary" and Consumer Conduct'. *Medieval Conduct*. Ed. K. Ashley and R. L. A. Clark. Medieval Cultures 29. London, 2001. Pp. 1-22.
- Starkey, D. 'The Age of the Household: Politics, Society and Arts'. *The Later Middle Ages*. Ed. S. Medcalf. London, 1981. Pp. 225-90.
- Starn, R., and Partridge, L. 'The Republican Regime of the Sala dei Nove in Siena, 1338-1340'. *Arts of Power: Three Halls of State in Italy 1300-1600*. Oxford, 1992. Pp. 11-59.
- Stell, P. M. 'Medical Care in Late Medieval York'. Unpublished MA Diss., University of York, 1995.
- Stell, P. M. *Medical Practice in Medieval York*. Borthwick Paper 90. York, 1996.
- Stell, P. M. 'The Apothecaries of Medieval York'. *York Historian* 14 (1997): 26-31.
- Strohm, P. *Theory and the Premodern Text*. Medieval Cultures 26. London, 2000.
- Sutcliffe, S. 'The Cult of St Sitha in England: An Introduction'. *Nottingham Medieval Studies* 37 (1993): 83-89.
- Sutton, A. F. 'Caxton was a Mercer: His Social Milieu and Friends'. *England in the Fifteenth Century: Proceedings of the 1992 Harlaxton Symposium*. Ed. N. Rogers. Harlaxton Medieval Studies 4. Stamford, 1994. Pp. 118-48.
- Swabey, ff. 'The Household of Alice de Bryene, 1412-13'. *Food and Eating in Medieval Europe*. Ed. M. Carlin and J. T. Rosenthal. London, 1998. Pp. 133-44.
- Swabey, ff. *Medieval Gentlewoman: Life in a Widow's Household in the Later Middle Ages*. Stroud, 1999.
- Tait, J. *The Medieval English Borough: Studies on its Origins*. Manchester, 1936.
- Talbot, C. H. *Medicine in Medieval England*. London, 1967.
- Talbot, C. H. and Hammond, E. A. *The Medical Practitioners in Medieval England: A Biographical Register*. London, 1965.
- Tatlock, J. P. S. *The Legendary History of Britain: Geoffrey of Monmouth's Historia regum Britanniae and its Early Vernacular Version*. Berkeley, 1950.
- Tentler, T. N. *Sin and Confession on the Eve of the Reformation*. Princeton, 1977.



- Tentler, T. N. 'The *Summa* for Confessors as an Instrument for Social Control'. *The Pursuit of Holiness in Late Medieval and Renaissance Religion: Papers from the University of Michigan Conference*. Ed. C. Trinkhaus and H. A. Oberman. Leiden, 1974. Pp. 103-26.
- Thomas, C., *et al.* *Excavations at the Priory and Hospital of St Mary Spital, London*. London, 1997.
- Thomas, K. 'Introduction'. *A Cultural History of Gesture: From Antiquity to the Present Day*. Ed. J. Bremmer and H. Roodenberg. Cambridge, 1991. Pp. 1-14.
- Thompson, J. J. *Robert Thornton and the London Thornton Manuscript: British Library MS Additional 31042*. Cambridge, 1987.
- Thompson, M. *The Medieval Hall: The Basis of Secular Domestic Life, 600-1600 AD*. Aldershot, 1995.
- Thorndike, L. 'Translation of a Letter from a Physician of Valencia to His Two Sons Studying at Tolouse 1315 A. D.'. *Annals of Medical History*, NS 3 (1931): 17-20.
- Thorndike, L. 'A Medieval Sauce Book'. *Speculum* 9 (1934): 183-90.
- Thorold Rogers, J. E. *A History of Agriculture and Prices in England from the Year after the Oxford Parliament (1259) to the Commencement of the Continental War (1793)*. Volume 3. Oxford, 1882.
- Thrupp, S. *The Merchant Class of Medieval London*. Michigan, 1962<sup>48</sup>.
- Thurgood, J. M. 'The Diet and Domestic Households of the English Lay Nobility, 1265-1531'. Unpublished MPhil Diss., Queen Mary's College, London University, 1982.
- Tillotson, J. H. *Marrick Priory: A Nunnery in Late Medieval Yorkshire*. Borthwick Paper 75. York, 1989.
- Thursty, B. A. 'The Devil's Altar: Society and Drinking in Early Modern Ausberg'. Unpublished PhD. Diss., Maryland University, 1994.
- Toswell, M. J. 'Of Dogs, Cawdels and Contrition: A Penitential Motif in *Piers Plowman*'. *Yearbook of Langland Studies* 7 (1993): 113-21.
- Trease, G. E., and Hodson, H. 'The Inventory of John Hexham, A Fifteenth-Century Apothecary'. *Medical History* 9 (1965): 76-81.
- Trigg, S. 'The Rhetoric of Excess in *Winner and Waster*'. *Medieval English Poetry*. Ed. S. Trigg. London, 1993. Pp. 186-202.



- Turville-Petre, T. 'The Prologue of *Wynnere and Wastoure*'. *Leeds Studies in English* NS 18 (1987): 19-29.
- Turville-Petre, T. 'A Middle English Life of St Zita'. *Nottingham Medieval Studies* 35 (1991): 102-5.
- Tuve, R. 'Notes on the Vices and Virtues: Part I: Two Fifteenth-Century Lines of Dependence on the Thirteenth and Twelfth Centuries'. *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institute* 26 (1963): 264-303.
- Tuve, R. 'Note on the Vices and Virtues: Part II', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institute* 27 (1964): 42-72.
- Umberkircher, F. *Tacuinum sanitatis in medicina: Codex Vindoboniensis Series Nova 2644 of the Austrian Library. Commentary to the Facsimile Edition*. Trans. H. Saxer and C. H. Talbot. London, 1968.
- Unwin, G. *The Gilds and Companies of London*. London, 1908.
- Ussery, H. E. *Chaucer's Physician: Medicine and Literature in Fourteenth-Century England*. Tulane Studies in English, 19. New Orleans, 1971.
- Vögtle, A. 'Woher stammt das Schema der Hauptsünden?'. *Theologische Quartalschrift* 122 (1941): 217-37.
- Voigts, L. E. 'Editing Middle English Texts: Needs and Issues'. *Editing Texts in the History of Science and Medicine: Papers Given at the Seventeenth Annual Conference on Editorial Problems, University of Toronto, 6-7 November 1981*. Ed. T. H. Levere. London, 1982. Pp. 39-68.
- Voigts, L. E. 'Medical Prose'. *Middle English Prose: A Critical Guide to Major Authors and Genres*. Ed. A. S. G. Edwards. New Brunswick, 1984. Pp. 315-55.
- Voigts, L. E. 'Scientific and Medical Books'. *Book Production and Publishing in Britain 1375-1475*. Ed. J. Griffiths and D. Pearsall. Cambridge, 1989. Pp. 345-402.
- Voigts, L. E. 'The "Sloane Group": Related Scientific and Medical Manuscripts from the Fifteenth Century in the Sloane Collection'. *British Library Journal* 16 (1990): 26-57.
- Voigts, L. E. 'Multitudes of Middle English Medical Manuscripts, or the Englishing of Science and Medicine'. *Manuscript Sources of Medieval Medicine: A Book of Essays*. Ed. M. R. Schleissner. London, 1995. Pp. 183-95.



- Voigts, L. E. and McVaugh, M. R. 'A Latin Technical Phlebotomy and its Middle English Translations'. *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society* 74 (1984): 1-69.
- Waley, D. *The Italian City-Republics*. 3<sup>rd</sup> edn. London, 1988.
- Watney, J. *Some Account of the Hospital of St Thomas Acon in the Cheap, London, and of the Plate of the Mercers' Company*. London, 1906.
- Watson, G. *Theriac and Mithridatum: A Study in Therapeutics*. London, 1976.
- Webb, D. 'Woman and Home: The Domestic Setting of Late Medieval Spirituality'. *Women in the Church: Papers Read at the 1989 Summer Meeting and the 1990 Winter Meeting of the Ecclesiastical History Society*. Ed. W. J. Sheils and D. Wood. *Studies in Church History* 27. 1990. Pp. 159-73.
- Weiss, S. F. 'Medieval and Renaissance Wedding Banquets and Other Feasts'. *Food and Eating in Medieval Europe*. Ed. M. Carlin and J. T. Rosenthal. London, 1998. Pp. 159-74.
- Weiss Adamson, M. *Medieval Dietetics: Food and Drink in Regimen sanitatis Literature from 800-1400*. Ed. M. Kuxdorf. *German Studies in Canada* 5. Frankfurt Am Maine, 1995.
- Weiland, G. 'The Reception and Interpretation of Aristotle's *Ethics*'. *The Cambridge History of Later Medieval Philosophy: From the Rediscovery of Aristotle to the Disintegration of Scholasticism*. Ed. N. Kretzmann, A. Kenny, and J. Pinbourg. Cambridge, 1982. Pp. 657-72.
- Wells, S. 'The Social Meanings of Food in Later Medieval England'. Unpublished MA Diss., York University, 1999.
- Wenzel, S. *The Sin of Sloth: Acedia in Medieval Thought and Literature*. Durham, N. C., 1960.
- Wenzel, S. 'Acedia 700-1200'. *Traditio* 22 (1966): 73-102.
- Wenzel, S. 'The Three Enemies of Man'. *Mediaeval Studies* 29 (1967): 47-66.
- Wenzel, S. 'The Seven Deadly Sins: Some Problems of Research'. *Speculum* 43 (1968): 1-22.
- Wenzel, S. 'The Source for the *Remedia* in the Parson's Tale'. *Traditio* 27 (1971): 433-53.
- Wenzel, S. 'The Source for Chaucer's Seven Deadly Sins'. *Traditio* 30 (1974): 351-78.



- Wenzel, S. 'Vices, Virtues and Popular Preaching'. *Medieval and Renaissance Studies: Proceedings of the Southeastern Institute of Medieval and Renaissance Studies, Summer 1974*. Ed. D. B. J. Randall. Durham, N. C., 1976. Pp. 28-84.
- Wenzel, S. *Verses in Sermons: Fasciculus morum and its Middle English Poems*. Cambridge, Mass., 1978.
- Wenzel, S. *Preachers, Poets and the Early English Lyric*. Princeton, 1986.
- Wenzel, S. 'The Continuing Life of William Peraldus's *Summa vitiorum*'. *Ad litteram: Authoritative Texts and Their Medieval Readers*. Ed. M. D. Jordan and K. Emery, Jr. London, 1992. Pp. 135-63.
- Westlake, H. F. *The Parish Gilds of Medieval England*. London, 1919.
- Wheatley, A. 'The Idea of the Castle in Medieval England'. Unpublished PhD Diss., York University, 2001.
- Wheeler, E., and Poh, T. S. 'Food for Equilibrium: The Dietary Principles and Practice of Chinese Families in London'. *The Sociology of Food and Eating: Essays on the Sociological Significance of Food*. Ed. A. Murcott. Aldershot, 1983. Pp. 84-94.
- White, E. 'The Measure of the Meat: Monastic Diet in Medieval England'. *Food for the Community: Special Diets for Special Groups*. Ed. C. A. Wilson. Edinburgh, 1993. Pp. 5-42.
- Wilcockson, C. 'Glutton's Black Mass: *Piers Plowman*, B-Text, Passus V 297-385'. *Notes and Queries*, NS 45 (1998): 173-76.
- Wilkins, J. 'Eating À L'Ancienne: The Lesson of Galen'. *Petits propos culinaires* 68 (2001): 18-28.
- Wilson, A. 'The Ceremony of Childbirth and Its Interpretation'. *Women as Mothers in Pre-Industrial England: Essays in Memory of Dorothy McLaren*. Ed. V. Fildes. London, 1990. Pp. 68-107.
- Wilson, C. A. *Food and Drink in Britain: From the Stone Age to Recent Times*. London, 1973.
- Wilson, C. A. 'From Medieval Great Hall to Country-House Dining Room: The Furniture and Setting of the Social Meal'. *The Appetite and the Eye*. Ed. C. A. Wilson. Edinburgh, 1987. Pp. 28-55.
- Windeatt, B. 'Gesture in Chaucer'. *Medievalia et humanistica*, NS 9 (1979): 143-61.



- Woolgar, C. 'Diet and Consumption in Gentry and Noble Households: A Case Study from Around the Wash'. *Rulers and Ruled in Late Medieval England. Essays Presented to Gerald Harris*. Ed. R. E. Archer and S. Walker. London, 1995. Pp. 17-31.
- Woolgar, C. M. *The Great Household in Late Medieval England*. London, 1999.
- Woolgar, C. 'Fast and Feast: Conspicuous Consumption and the Diet of the Nobility in the Fifteenth Century'. *Revolution and Consumption in Late Medieval England*. Ed. M. Hicks. The Fifteenth Century Vol. 2. Woodbridge, 2001. Pp. 7-25.
- Yeager, R. F. 'Aspects of Gluttony in Chaucer and Gower'. *Studies in Philology* 81 (1984): 42-55.